A PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

As Gathered from the Writings of Swedenborg

by

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Give thanks, O heart, for the high souls
That point us to the deathless goals—
For all the courage of their cry
That echoes down from sky to sky;
Thanksgiving for the armèd seers,
And heroes called to mortal years—
Souls that have built our faith in man,
And lit the ages as they ran.

Conscripts of the Dream.

EDWIN MARKHAM

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Preface

No attempt is made in these chapters to expound the whole of Swedenborg's philosophy. Ordinarily, it is his more metaphysical philosophy which is presented; here, in discussing the goal of life and its pursuit, it is his ethical philosophy which is outlined. The reader will find hardly anything about the doctrines of degrees, forms, etc., with which Swedenborg's philosophy is generally identified. He will find rather the working principles for life which that philosophy affords.

It should also be remarked that it is not the aim to reproduce Swedenborg's ethical philosophy in his own words. No philosophy means much until it has been assimilated. Without apology, therefore, I present outlines of that philosophy at the point of its application to needs and questions, not only in my own language, but as I apprehend this philosophy and its applications.

I do not quote Swedenborg more often than I do, for the further reason that his language is technical, and therefore somewhat estranging. Other writers are generously quoted, not only because they give a contemporary phrasing of Swedenborg's thought, but because it then appears how comprehensively Swedenborg discussed what is in the minds of others. His very different language often obscures this simple fact.

Swedenborg not only has an ethical philosophy to

be distinguished from his metaphysical; that ethical philosophy is complicated by much else in his writings, from which it is also to be distinguished. In his earlier years, he was engaged as a philosopher on scientific questions; in his later period his philosophy is involved in his theology. But if the ethical philosophy is not wholly separable from these other elements, it is distinguishable. We have tried to hold to it. The rôle of philosopher, moreover, was his one lifelong rôle.

Of the need at this day for a unifying and directive philosophy of life, we have something to say at once, and shall not anticipate the subject here. This brief presentation of Swedenborg's philosophy, and of what can be made of it, we offer in the hope that many will find in it the means of supplying that urgent need for themselves and for others.

* * *

Originally these chapters were four informal addresses, given in and around New York City, under the auspices of the Swedenborg Publishing Association. For the most part the mode of spoken address is retained, and the chapters are referred to as talks.

W. F. W.

Cambridge, Mass., 1937.

I

The Goal of Life

THE PURPOSE of these talks is to invite attention to some books widely distributed, little read, and even less studied. It may seem that these books were written too long ago to be significant today. I hope to show that this is not the case. Although written by Emanuel Swedenborg more than a century and a half ago, these books yield a philosophy of life eminently serviceable today, perhaps imperatively needed today. By exhibiting this philosophy of life in outline, I may arouse some curiosity about the man and stimulate a wider reading of his books. It would be a gratifying result if the hearer should say finally, "I must read Swedenborg myself," or, "I must read him again." But as I pursue the more immediate purpose, the greater may have been accomplished, of bringing to your notice, perhaps of putting into your hands, a commanding philosophy of life.

There have been ages in human history when a prevalent philosophy directed and unified thought and life. The classic Greek period was one such age, and the days of faith in the Middle Ages were another. But today there is no commanding philosophy of life integrating any particular civilization. The void is felt by the reflecting person in an intellectual appreciation that a unifying philosophy is missing, and by the general run of people in the inevitable result then that life seems frustrate and without purpose.

But let us have the word of some competent observers on this point. In a book on *Greek Ideals and Modern Life,* Sir R. W. Livingstone, President of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, addresses the contemporary lack of a unifying view of life. He begins with certain assumptions. One is "that Huxley is right in his belief, that 'no human being, and no society composed of human beings, ever did or ever will come to much, unless their conduct was governed and guided by the love of some ethical ideal.' " The second assumption is that "the chief weakness of this age is a vague mind and a feeble grasp, so far as ethical ideals are concerned." Dr. Livingstone himself feels that the classical ideals of Greece would help in this intellectual void, but goes on to say — and this is what we are quoting him for especially:

> Those who doubt the remedy will not deny the disease. We know that the world is, economically, in grave difficulties. We have begun to see that its spiritual condition is at least as unsatisfactory and that the future may admire us less than we used to admire ourselves. Ages are not taken at their own valuation by posterity. . . . Two hundred years hence our own age may be regarded as one that possessed for its time considerable material civilization but very little else. . . .
>
> The real cause of our *malaise* is the absence of what Huxley (afraid of the word "spiritual") called an ethical ideal. This explains, if not the disease, the difficulty of curing it. We do not know what we believe; therefore we do not know what we want. So we succumb to the heady emotions, like nationalism, fascism, communism, militarism, pacificism. . . . We become the slaves of our material civilization and not its masters. No steady wind of purpose fills the sails of our ship. The modern world has no definite view of life. Christianity, though still a living religion, and, even with those who reject it, a powerful influence, is no longer the creed of Europe, and nothing has taken its place. The majority of men have exchanged the certainty of faith for a twilight of opinion.[1]

So speaks a transatlantic observer of our day. Let us also hear an American witness, who dwells more upon the lack of aim which is sure to attend on the general absence of a philosophy of life. For the void is never a vacuum. Moral scepticisms spring up, which make life seem a blind alley. Dr. Joseph Fort Newton is this second witness, who writes:

> The strange sickness of our generation is lack of belief in the worth of life. For too many of us life seems to have run into a blind alley of frustration.[2]

To help fill this void in contemporary thought and life I am nominating for consideration the very practical philosophy of life to be gleaned from the works of Swedenborg. As I try to outline this philosophy, I shall put all his works under requisition, both his scientific works and his theological writings. One rôle Swedenborg maintained throughout his life—the rôle of philosopher. In the earlier half of his life he was definitely engaged as a philosopher upon a wide variety of scientific questions; and in his later period, when he devoted himself to theology, he did not cease, of course, to be the philosopher. To be sure, the philosophy which had been uppermost in the earlier period, became implicit, during the latter half of his life, in his theological thought. It is probably not altogether separable from the theology, but it is a distinguishable element. It also answers still to the name of philosophy, as much as does any other philosophical thought.

In this first talk let us interrogate Swedenborg's philosophy on a single point — the goal of human life. What does he offer in answer to the query, "What is life meant for?" Can his philosophy do anything to

erect the goal of life once more in our sight and to allay the widespread sense of frustration and the feeling that life has no worth?

To hold much promise, a philosophy of life must be willing to start in conditions which we have to meet. To have enduring value, it must address conditions which are an unfailing feature of our existence. We seize upon one condition which life and the human being never escape — the fact that life is full not only of contradictions but of struggle and conflict. There are health and disease, life and death. There is what we visualize, and what actually is. There is fine aspiration, and poor performance. There are high longings, and mean and stubborn circumstance. There is disinterested service, but it meets inertia always, misrepresentation and jeers often, and sometimes crucifixion by the concentrated fury of ignorance. There is the sense of justice asserting itself unweariedly among the inequities of this troubled planet. There are aspirations after personal culture, and contending with them the hard necessities of a livelihood and the encroachments of mechanization and routine. There are dreams of brotherhood and cooperation, and the recurring nightmare of mutually destructive wars. Wrapped up in contradiction after contradiction there is moral and spiritual struggle. At the heart of lesser conflicts, good and evil are at war. We do not know what life may have been like when the morning stars first sang, but so life stands now, and has always stood as far as we know. We gaze at man, and see —

> Placed on this isthmus of a middle state,
> A being darkly wise and rudely great: . . .
> Created half to rise, and half to fall;

> Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all;
> Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurl'd;
> The glory, jest, and riddle of the world![3]

The conflicting elements which are to be found abroad in the world, also move in our own bosoms and pervade our personal beings. Is there anything more fundamental or inescapable with which a philosophy of life must reckon? This is our universe, and to be capable of directing life deeply and well, a philosophy of life must have this universe for its universe. It must be mindful of the eternal conflicts in life, and give value and hope to so unavoidable a struggle.

There is a quick treatment which many are inclined to give this contradictory existence today as they meet it in their own experience. In their view, religion is not called for. What with the vogue of psychology, they are persuaded to reduce any conflict in the first place to the psychological. Mental and emotional knots have to be undone; then life is smooth enough. The treatment suffices if the conflict is no deeper. It often is deeper, however, but is not seen to be. It is evaded, then; in effect a retreat is beaten from moral and spiritual struggle. Where moral sensitiveness, never too keen, has dulled, and the spirit of religion is relaxed or has disappeared, higher elements in the conflict, like truth's demands on conscience, seem dreamlike and visionary. They are "old dreams far better lost." They are relics of an impossibly religious view of life. We say, "Let us be honest with ourselves. These dreams do not reflect us. They are strained aspirations." In the name of our actual selves, unhypocritically regarded, and for a more easily attained harmony of our inner lives, we usher the finer

set of conflicting elements out of our life. Calling aspirations pretenses, we throw them away. Is there not such a prevalent, public psychology? A flippant verse has it,

> Let our primitive urges
> Disgruntle our clergies.

Doubtless clergies do not figure so heavily. What about the debasement of our own lives? It is an old treatment. Certain sanctions and rationalizations of it may be contemporary, but the form of address to the difficulties of life is ancient enough. It has always seemed to serious souls what they plainly called it — degeneration.

At least in such an address to the conflicts in life it would not be possible to find a goal for life. Personal integration is sought, and often reached, but around what? It is bound to be something less than the best in us and less than the best in life. No goal is defined, for instance, in current talk of the right to happiness — unless it is the old goal of pleasure. That goal, and other goals such as power and even stoical self-command, have never satisfied human striving. Civilizations pursuing them, like human individuals doing so, drop back, and do not move forward; they decline, and do not climb. Any high goal, so far from appearing in the facile treatment of life's conflicts which we have described, is foresworn by such treatment.

But in ages of more trust in the goodness of life, and of high estimate of its worth, men have accorded the struggle in life another treatment. They have welcomed it. They have been ready to see its moral and spiritual aspects. Indeed, they have been drawn to the higher set of conflicting elements. They have rec-

ognized in the "old dreams," which today have chiefly a nuisance value, their true life. Whatever their actual self, there was more that a man could be. Aspiration was not permitted to become pretense. So the "more" which might be, was real. In a whole inner life, marked by peace, they were as much interested as any one, but there was only one path to the harmony — to hold to the highest through whatever struggle was involved. Instead of slipping out of struggle, they plunged into it. When we use the word "noble" of human lives, do we not mean just this? We use the word of those who pay the cost of the highest self-realization.

It is this attitude to the conflict in life, and especially to that conflict as it turns eventually moral and spiritual, that the philosophy of Swedenborg takes. The universe which we described above is the universe of his philosophy; and to the point of tiresome reiteration Swedenborg dwells on the inevitability of moral struggle for the completion of manhood. His uncompromisingness is well summarized in some words of Browning's:

> No, when the fight begins within himself,
> A man's worth something. God stoops o'er his head,
> Satan looks up between his feet — both tug —
> He's left, himself, i' the middle: the soul wakes
> And grows. Prolong that battle through his life!
> Never leave growing till the life to come![4]

If we interrogate Swedenborg's philosophy, and ask, "Why go through with this struggle?" the answer is an assured one: "The struggle is intended." Again a publicly current psychology would lead us to believe that moral conflict, along with other conflicts, mental and emotional, has arisen by mistake or unnecessarily,

if not by some crazy behavior of our natures. No genuine psychology has so belittled moral struggle or the human being; only a thin psychology avidly welcomed by morally unawakened human nature. The philosophy of Swedenborg does not think that the moral struggle has come on the scene by some mistake. It has not got into our breasts and into the habit of things by some queer turn of inner events. It belongs in the evolving order of things, of which it is a glory. It is intended. It is the path of manhood's unfolding. It is the challenge of a Divine will for man.

Then suppose we put to Swedenborg's philosophy the further question, "Why is this moral and spiritual endeavor, within our persons and in our participation in society, so sternly and surely intended?" The answer is that the goal of life lies on the other side of the struggle. No, we can be more precise. The goal of life appears *in* this moral and spiritual struggle. Perhaps that is a chief reason why we do not easily see the goal of life. "In itself," some one has remarked, "life is neither futile nor purposeful; it is potential." Its purposes appear only in the seizure of its highest possibilities for us. It is a developing world, in other words, in which our lives are cast. Swedenborg's philosophy is as sure of this fact in the moral realm, as is science in the realm of the physical formation of the world. It is an evolving world, not a static one. And the goal of life emerges in the development, particularly in the moral and spiritual unfolding, of life. The goal is not fixed somewhere in the distance, like some runner's goal; it is within and ahead of moral and spiritual effort, as independent judgment lies in our years of maturity.

This may seem a long preamble before beginning to say what the goal of life is, as conceived in Swedenborg's philosophy. But it makes plain that an adequate philosophy must be an ethical one, and our outlines are outlines of Swedenborg's ethical philosophy. What we have said will also help us not to misunderstand his words as he depicts the goal of life. If one kept to his bare words alone, one might easily throw up one's hands in amazement and disappointment, and cry, "What! Only the old, traditional idea of a supernatural heaven!" For Swedenborg uses traditional language to put his idea. We shall see why in a moment. And he does place the goal in the immortal world, though this does not mean to him that the goal fails to emerge here. Indeed, we must continue our preamble a little longer. Before quoting his words, let us say in our own fashion how he conceives the goal of life. He places it in a company of men and women who are engaged in joint and individual effort to make the next better thing in human life a reality. This company Swedenborg thinks of as a company conserved forever in the world of the spirit, but always forming here. History, civilization — both issue in such a company of earnest men and women. In them the goal of life is realized; to be among them is the goal of any life. This is what life is for — to grow a society of men and women bringing the next better thing into existence in themselves and, as far as they can, in the life around them.

For sixty years of mature thought Swedenborg thus conceived of the goal of life. Whether he is talking of it in his scientific works, or more intimately of it in his theological writings, it is ever the same great

objective which he depicts. But now let us have words of his own. We quote from one of his scientific works. At the time he wrote this passage, he was absorbed as a philosopher with questions about the human soul; it was before he began on his theological career. The passage incidentally gives us a good example of his mode of reasoning.

> If then everything in the universe respects some end as the ground of its existence; and if ends and means ascend from nature to life, from life to intelligence, and from intelligence to wisdom, it follows that the universe is created for the ultimate subjects of creation, in short, for men as the abodes of intelligence, and therefore assuredly for their souls. For human souls do not exist as means to the organic forms of human bodies, but contrariwise. . . . Is there not then an ascent from the created universe through human intelligences or souls to Him as the last end who was the first? : . . And do not those souls themselves exist for an end beyond nature — an end which they penetrate into by intuition, and which is no other than the existence of a society of souls, in which the end of creation may be regarded by God, and by which God may be regarded as the end of ends?
>
> If there be a society of souls, must not the city of God on the universal earth be the seminary of it?[5]

In this view of the goal of life, as we said, Swedenborg persisted to the end of his days, in his later period removing only the "ifs" from his picture. In these traditional terms, of a society of souls, if with fresh reasoning, he described the ultimate object of creation — the raising of a company perpetually here, to be perpetuated hereafter, of men and women, themselves —as "abodes of intelligence"—contributions to life.

But, you will say, this is nothing new. We have heard of this goal. Perhaps not in just these terms, but it seems the anciently recognized goal. Of course, it is nothing new! How can it be? The goal of life

has not been set up recently. It must be as old as life. A philosophy is sound as it describes the goal which has always been. It is suspect if it affects to contrive a new goal. At the core of every civilization, accounting in fact for that civilization, is such a company of men and women as Swedenborg denominates "the city of God." Men have long recognized such a company.

> Halte das Bild der Würdigen fest! Wie leuchtende Sterne
> Teilte sie aus die Natur durch den unendlichen Raum.[9]

The company is the "beloved community" of more than one philosopher; it is the "utopia" of others; it is the "kingdom of God on earth" of the Gospels. It is the fellowship of those who move into light and life and who help others to do so, and of those who are "the salt of the earth," and "the light of the world." The company is the finest fruit of the trial of life by man; it unfailingly exists; our only quarrel with it is that it is too small a band in almost every age of the world — each age feels this the most keenly! It is the old goal, of course; it must be. In what more could life issue? What higher goal or what other goal could be set up? This is the only utopia which has germinated in history. Other utopias have yet to leave the pages of the books in which they are proposed; but this company is unfailingly if not steadily produced in history and by civilization. In his pages Swedenborg is content to describe it. He proposes nothing novel. He does not set the goal; he sees it.

Still if this is the goal, ancient, and not unrecognized generally, why turn to Swedenborg's philosophy for word of it? It is almost reason enough that his philosophy reminds men of it once more. As we enter

into his picture of the goal, we shall find further reasons for consulting his philosophy. The goal of life as presented by Swedenborg is intensely human; it is rested plainly upon the present scene; at the same time it may be the more confidently pursued if seen to be the goal not of a perishing but of an immortal life; it has social significance as well as significance for the individual; it is a goal with all manner of reconstructive suggestions for religious thought. We shall take these reasons up in some detail. In general, as I hope we shall find, Swedenborg throws a new and timely light on the ancient goal.

As a philosopher, before he did so as a theologian, Swedenborg reached the idea of immortality in general, and the immortality of the fellowship of the goal in particular. No goal can be the goal of life, surely, if it is a dying goal; that is, if the company realizing it does so only to disappear in death. The goal hardly earns its name in that event. Realized by an ever dying society, how can it be the goal of life? History is always at ragged ends; *finis* is never set down after it; these ends are best gathered up by the generations which left them unfinished. The life of a creative, mature individual has a thousand possibilities which death would waste. Justice is never reached by many an ordinary man. Swedenborg employs old and new arguments for a goal of life which inhabits eternity. The goal is undying. The fellowship of the goal is immortal.

Conceiving the goal in this way, Swedenborg's philosophy gives — or rather the goal gives — a high certitude to moral and spiritual striving. We are not soaring into dreamland, attempting a world which is

regularly blotted out, when we direct our own steps to this high goal. Our efforts are not thrown away or unreal. Men are not encouraged, however, to say, "Ah, then, effort will be rewarded! Here is the old celestial bribery of the soul!" For the goal is innocent of self-seeking. The company in which the goal is measurably realized is a company pursuing the truth for the truth's sake, striking for justice in the interests of justice, doing its best to do its best. Seeking to be in that company is to receive a righteous man in the name of a righteous man. The goal means the reality of disinterested living. There is a whole world of such life — an undying world. The goal is not an invention with which we soften death. Swedenborg's philosophy serves to erect the goal again in this immortal confidence.

Perhaps even more serviceably for the present day, this philosophy enables us to see the goal of life on the present scene. The society in which the goal is at least measurably realized is not a far-off Divine event. That company is being constantly recruited right here. It is within reach. We are not talking of something utterly unknown and unexperienced. With good confidence we may even name men and women who, we think, must be in that company. Some of them will be figures in history — Socrates, Jeremiah, St. Francis of Assisi, Lincoln, Pasteur, Cardinal Mercier, Jane Addams. The Christ was the Captain-elect of the company, B.C., and has been its Captain, A.D. In this fellowship we may also feel confident of placing personal acquaintances—men of tried integrity, women of exalted and exquisite spirit. Indeed if such as these do not belong (with allowance made for the feebleness of our judgment), we should have doubts that there is

any such company. Ever over the contemporary scene moves a relatively indefinable band, men and women holding with fidelity to a high course and acquitting themselves nobly. The company of the goal is being recruited daily on this earthly scene.

Again, there is the reason for turning to Swedenborg's philosophy of life which we listed first, that the goal of life is made so human. Note that in Swedenborg's "city of God" there are no angels or other creatures who were never known on land or sea. Human beings are his "abodes of intelligence," and the only "angels" he knows. Boys have felt discomfort and adults something more than discomfort when they have been called upon to sing, "I want to be an angel." But to be confronted in aspiration with the company of which Swedenborg's philosophy speaks, is to find all human life dignified and made manly and womanly. It is to be challenged, not to be made to feel ridiculous. Some ancient glamour may be lost in a picture of the immortal company as an exclusively human fellowship. But the haloes become understandable haloes; they reflect and they irradiate our life. What greater glamour can there be than for human beings to display the goal of life to more and more human beings? Incidentally said, how much more of an achievement it is also for a Creator to fashion the company of the goal, not from celestial beings who never wrestled with earth, but from men and women on the dusty roads of life! Such an outcome holds solid promise for the race. Such a goal means a thoroughfare wide open to human striving. Name, if you can, a more significant enterprise for God to have filled the world with!

Once more, the goal of life as apprehended in

Swedenborg's philosophy has a social significance. It means something to society, not only to the individual. It is at once depicted as realized in a society.

I can only indicate sketchily some of the bearings of our goal on social questions. We meet large, controlling facts, as that the company of the goal is a highly cooperative society in all the uses of life. It also practises collective action towards great ends. Swedenborg thinks of society as a larger man, able and called upon to govern the corporate life. From passages here and there in Swedenborg one can also derive definite sociological theories. But above all, his philosophy breathes a certain spirit which must inform social action toward the great goal. The company of the goal is a free society, in the achievements of which there is exercise of individual initiative, exercise of personal talent, a full self-realization. It is a society of which fascism and many a planned economy is a contradiction. It spurns the coercion by which these societies are brought into being. Souls enamored of "the kingdom of God" and its manner of society rightly feel revolt against societies erected on or by force. The goal of life has a bearing upon these political issues.

> A society in which men are ticketed, pigeon-holed, regimented and directed from the cradle to the grave is bound to be very different from one composed of free men directing their lives in accordance with their talents and inclinations.[1]

What means the revulsion which we feel for coercive societies, except, in part, an attraction to the free society of which we must have caught a glimpse?

Nationalism is another tendency which looks all

the more suspect in the light of the goal we have been considering. Nationalism affects to displace religion, and is increasingly the rival of religion today. Its fearful narrowness is especially glaring in the light of our goal. Nationalism exalts one people or race, while the society of the goal is obviously gathered from all peoples and races, in loyalties which not only transcend racial superiority and prejudice, but which have greater claims on men than has country or nation. So also forced allegiances, extracted by oath imposed by some on others, rightly irritate the soul which is drawn to the great society formed by loyalties pursued in all freedom. Intolerance is an obvious lapse from the pursuit of the beloved community, in which tolerance is an essential spirit.

It is easier in a few words to indicate the spirit which flows into society from the goal of life as apprehended by Swedenborg than to present properly any of the principles of his philosophy for social guidance; so we have dwelt on this spirit. But, as we have said, principles there are; sometimes diagrammatically stated, as in his *Charity,* No. 130; sometimes merely suggested or implicit in what he says, and still to be elaborated beyond the point at which he left them. His philosophy affords at least the beginnings of needed critiques of many currently proposed forms of social organization which endanger both the vision and the pursuit of mankind's true goal in life.

There remains among the reasons we have given for turning to Swedenborg's philosophy for its apprehension of the goal of life — that it makes the goal signify new and needed things to religion.

We point out two or three of these only. That the

religion of Christendom is undergoing reconstruction is a commonplace. This reconstruction would be given certain directions by Swedenborg's apprehension of the goal of life. The society of the goal is plainly not constituted of the passive pious or of non-doers. It consists of those who have contributed themselves utterly to a cause. They are not the conventionally good. They know what militant goodness is. They have striven to bring to pass the next possible mercy, the next possible justice, the next truth which offered. They have dared and worked. Their idea is that "the life of religion is to do good" (to quote an insistent and repeated statement of Swedenborg). How different this is from conceiving the outcome of life as a haven for the correct believer and for the harmless devout! A negative goodness has too often been stressed in historical religion rather than an achievement of something good. Just so much in the significance of the goal of life is revolutionary to ordinary religious thought.

Again, we have in the society of the goal men and women who see the spiritual life involved always in the whole round of their interests. They do not divorce culture from righteousness. The church is not the embodiment and final expression of their religion; only life can be that. They insist that life — *all* life — must be the expression of their aspirations and standards. The goal is wide as humanity's life, not ecclesiastically bounded. The deep rooting of this fact in religious thought would again work a revolution and restore religion as a full-bodied social force.

For a third significance, the goal of which Swedenborg speaks would save religion from an ineffective individualism. The individual is not magnified in that

goal. Religious thought is not encouraged to dwell upon some blessed lot for an individual in another world, as though that could be outside and apart from the society which he cared to help establish. Only the socially concerned will be ardent about the goal. Here, then, is another revolutionary bearing of the society of the goal on religious thinking and outlook.

Religion's way back into influence may lie through just such things — social concern, the linkage of the spiritual life with the sum of culture, and the aggressiveness of the spirit of religion. In a book on *Paul Elmer More and American Criticism* there are some pages dealing with that philosopher's views on the reconstruction of religion. Mr. Shafer, the author, remarks in a foot-note:

> Unless such a reconstruction [of traditional Christianity] can be or is effected — not privately and by a few here and there, for themselves, but officially and institutionally — the Christian view of man and the world really is doomed to a long period of eclipse, and the Western hemisphere to a long period of progressive barbarization.[8]

Swedenborg shared this view, and must have done so as philosopher and not only as theologian. And not only does the goal of life as conceived by him contain such suggestions (as we have indicated, and many more) for a reconstruction of religious thought; but those men and women in Christendom who are pursuing that goal must be maintaining genuine Christianity alive. I was interested to see that Mr. Shafer continues:

> "Hence I cannot help thinking that the true custodians of Christianity of today are a few scattered individuals; and that the future of organized Christianity depends upon, and must await, the construction of a new Christian church, at once modern and genuine."[9]

The "few scattered individuals" who are "the true custodians of Christianity today" are quite such men and women as Swedenborg's philosophy has in mind in the fellowship of the goal.

For the present, these few reflections will serve to suggest how differently from traditional thought Swedenborg apprehends the goal of life. Yet, as we noticed, he speaks of it in the ancient kindling terms of religious speech. Why? We promised to take up this question. Of course, his is a religious philosophy. The fellowship of men and women among whom he finds the goal being realized, is a fellowship with motives and aims and a self-discipline which only the spirit of religion can generate and maintain. It is a company which in Swedenborg's view the Spirit of God organizes all over the earth. Hence he calls it "the city of God." Even to describe the goal of life well — attractively to the human heart, influentially to the human spirit — we must employ the language of religion. Aldous Huxley, discussing the problem of faith, says that for the faith which he urges, we need a perspective transcending cultural peculiarities, classes, nations and races. The goal of which we have been speaking gives precisely such a perspective — for it transcends class, nation and race. Mr. Huxley also says that we need to think in terms of centuries. It is doubtful if we have the wisdom to do so; but if we think in terms of values which endure even longer, that will do. The goal of life which Swedenborg's philosophy holds up in sight, will continue right through the centuries. But, says Huxley (and this is the point to which we have been moving), we lack words, images, symbols, for stating a faith with such a perspective and such an

outlook. Do we lack the necessary language? We do only if we are averse to re-appropriating religious terms, or are unable to see how differently they can be used from the orthodox use of them. Swedenborg makes bold to speak of the goal of life in the ancient kindling words, as a city of God, and as the kingdom of heaven on earth. He would agree with Professor Huxley that a reasoned philosophy about the goal of life needs to use "those terms of picturesque and exciting unreason which alone have the power to move the minds of men."

The pursuit of the goal, both on the outward scene, and in the ways of the inner life, will concern us in later talks. Still something in general might be said now, for the manner of attaining the goal also throws light on what the goal is. A goal of life which emerges in ethical striving, is not to be attained by dint of thought, of course. A philosophy about it is not the manner of attaining it, if it is a means thereto. A philosophy comes forward not to be entertained for itself, but to reveal the goal to be pursued. That goal must be lived toward. It is moved toward in courage, in insight, by every moral quality and action. As we collaborate toward it, it will also become clearer, and otherwise remain dim. A philosophy may make it clear to thought, but life alone will make it plain in fact. It is there only for striving toward it. Each of us must come to his living vision of it for himself, and for himself find his peculiar way toward it. There is no set recipe. The secret of this success is even less readily told than the secret of business success. Of all this we shall speak at some length later; but let us not consider the way more difficult than it is. I am prompted to

quote here a lifelike description of the really simple ways in which the great goal gradually emerges on us and comes to command us. In these words of Dean Robert Russell Wicks the goal and the fellowship of which we have been talking are plain to see, although the Dean is not speaking with any reference to the philosophy of Swedenborg or in our terms. His words are by so much the more illuminating; they also let us know that the goal is the ancient goal, recognized by every earnest disciple of life.

> A man is attracted by the vision of a finer possibility that is waiting to be realized in some sphere of the world's work. His self-interest, united with the interest of others, is helping to drive him; and perhaps some great necessity threatening every one, may be giving him determination. He becomes conscious of multitudes who do not care, but he knows the thing ought to be done, must be done, and some one must give himself to doing it. As he labors on, he finds that he has entered a fellowship of kindred souls, who in one place and another are dedicated to this task of making known more truth and establishing more adequate ways of life. He sees that this fellowship of the present is linked up to a fellowship of men in the past, who have labored and into whose labors he has entered. He refreshes his enthusiasm by renewing the memory of those who have suffered and given everything in the great cause. He summons the motive of gratitude to generate devotion. Almost unconsciously he fels that past and present workers are all united by a common spirit, in an enterprise that connects all the generations together in this unfailing struggle toward unexplored possibilities. It is as though all these different minds, thinking in their special ways, were sharing the thought of a mind greater and more far-reaching than all of them together.[10]

Still again I quote, not only to show that Swedenborg's philosophy is engaged with the goal which is goal to us all, but to bring you another arresting depiction of how the goal is attained. This time it is words from a recently published book by Dr. George

A. Buttrick, *The Christian Fact and Modern Doubt.* In the passage to be quoted, Dr. Buttrick is in effect describing a detachment of the company in which Swedenborg finds the goal of life realized. This detachment is imagined to be arriving in the immortal world, where the members of it speak as follows:

> "Lord, they told us to grab the present gain, but there was more zest in staking life on a 'grand Perhaps.' They told us to keep the momentary pleasure of the flesh, but we kept the soul's surmise. They told us they would not believe if they did not know. But we told them that if we knew, there would be no risk in life, no danger, no pain of tragedy—no hope! They did not understand that men lose everything when they lose the Unknown. They said that death is obvious beyond gainsaying, but we believed our soul against our sight. It was life to gamble on a heaven unseen—a better life than to clutch at what they called success. Forgive us all our brokennesses and blunderings. We ought to have made a finer venture of it. And now, Lord, where is that Man who dared *his* soul against the death of Calvary? Our only heaven is the heaven of his eyes."[11]

Inevitably left then for ethical striving to realize, the goal of life nevertheless needs to be raised before our eyes, in some way, by some philosophy of life. We do not need to be marching altogether blind; we do not want to march so. We shall not ever have a complete view of the goal; it means so many things to humanity in the course of time and in the variety of life. Our vision of it will clarify as we move toward it. But it needs to be indicated to us in some way at the outset. Swedenborg's philosophy displays it to intellectual sight. It is the immemorial goal, of course; are we interested in any other? His philosophy throws more light on it. That philosophy lets us see what an intensely and warmly human goal it is. It helps us catch sight of the goal as it emerges here and now in our lives. It erects the goal anew in the confidence of

immortality; the goal earns its name as the goal of life. Swedenborg displays the goal of life with bearings upon the social issues which may vex us, and upon religion, which may be in critical need of reconstruction toward the true objective of human life. One can commend and urge his philosophy, therefore, to help fill that void in current thought — the absence of a unifying and energizing view of life. If consciousness of a world-wide purpose is wanted to renew the race's forward march, does not this philosophy arouse it? Some one has written:

> Underlying the disorder in the outer world there is the disorder in the spirit of man. Only the consciousness of a purpose that is mightier than any man and worthy of all men, can fortify and inspirit and compose the souls of men.[12]

In Swedenborg's picture of the goal of life, is not the consciousness awakened of a purpose "mightier than any man and worthy of all men"?

II

Everyday Pursuit of the Goal

IT WOULD be possible to fix upon certain values like justice, truth, amity, and character, and to say that the goal of life consists in the achievement of them. Such values do not exist, however, in the abstract. They are to be found only in "subjects," as our philosopher would say, or only as they are embodied in human lives. It is an evidence of the practical nature of Swedenborg's philosophy, therefore, that he at once conceives the goal of life as a society of men and women in whom such values are incorporated. They are not men and women who merely make an occasional contribution to justice or to amity, as one gives a penny to a fund; they are themselves a continuing contribution, embodiments of these values ("forms," Swedenborg would say, of amity and of the spirit of justice). They are society's existing and growing fund of equity, integrity and worth of life. One's own goal is a place in this civilizing company.

In his view, and in fact, such men and women are never altogether absent from a civilization. Without the leaven of their presence there would be nothing to answer to the word "civilization." Imperceptibly, and in its whole extent untraceably, this company is always being recruited throughout the world. In the present talk we try to say how this fellowship of the goal forms and acquits itself on the mundane scene.

What a scene it is!

We cast a quick glance over it, to put ourselves in mind of the multifarious activities and mingled interests in the midst of which one must find his way. If the goal is pursued here and now, it must be pursued very largely in the life-work. Looking out and around, we are aware of a medley of inevitable activity: the manufacture of myriad wares, mining, shipping, agriculture, the care of trees, building, sculpture, painting, education, home-making, the healing of bodies, surgery, law-making, voting, cleaning up of vice rings, the feeding of people, the collection of waste, the provision of entertainment, acting, writing, the conduct of newspapers, the manipulation of public opinion, government, the maintenance of prisons and hospitals and asylums, athletics, soldiering and sailoring, aviation, the running of transportation systems, banking, the scanning of skies, stars and planets, ministry to the spiritual life, litigation, architecture, the composition of music — a welter of activities and pursuits which no list can exhaust. But somewhere in the thick of these activities, the lot of each of us is cast. In the midst of this perplexing and shuttling throng of things he finds himself physically, and has to find himself eventually in the terms of some purpose. On this scene the company of the goal forms, if it forms at all, and attempts its everyday pursuit of the goal.

That the aim of life is wholly unrelated to this scene of the inevitable activities of society, or that the aim of life cannot be established on this scene, is inconceivable. In that event life would be irrational. That the goal of life is to be pursued in any isolation or insulation from this thronging life, never even suggests itself to Swedenborg's philosophy. All his

counsel is to plunge into the necessities and work of the world in pursuit of the goal. The company in which Swedenborg sees the goal being realized at any time, is a fellowship of artisans, if not of artists, in the conduct of life as a whole, and particularly in the handling of their life-work. They themselves descry the goal in what they have to do here. Concerned with truth and justice, beauty and integrity, it is for them to achieve these qualities in the life which offers. The goal of life, even when it identifiable with the kingdom of God, is not to be shunted off the present scene into the distance. Emerson remarked that for a majority of people religion touches life at three points — birth, marriage and death, but that in Swedenborg's philosophy religion has to do with all the concerns and moments of life. The pursuit of the goal is to take place in shop and office, in education and art, in public policy, and not only in work but also in recreation. Our philosopher sees no walls impervious to religion, barring it from business or politics. Living one's life is not to be cut away from earning one's livelihood. Let us have two short passages from Swedenborg's *Heaven and Hell* to see how intently, in his view, the company of the goal concerns itself with the passing scene. ("The life which leads to heaven" and "the spiritual life" are Swedenborg's later theological terms for the life toward which the fellowship of the goal is striving.)

> There are some who think that to lead the life which leads to heaven or the spiritual life means renunciation of the world and of life in the world. In fact, those who renounce the world and live in the spirit acquire a sorrowful life not receptive of heavenly happiness. On the contrary, to receive the life of heaven a man must needs live in the world and engage in its business and employ-

> ments, and by means of a moral and civic life receive the spiritual life. In no other way can the spiritual life be formed in man.[2]
>
> The spiritual life is not a life withdrawn from the world, but one lived in it.[3]

In Swedenborg's philosophy, therefore, we have a philosophy in which "the ends of the spirit" are not separated "from the routine business of life."[4] Ethical philosophies have not, for the most part, concerned themselves much with the ordinary life-work. The Greek ethics so conceived the excellence of life that Aristotle could say:

> It is impossible to live the life of a mechanic or laborer and at the same time to devote oneself to the practice of virtue.[5]

In those days, war and statesmanship were the honored activities; in medieval times the vocation of the cleric was placed beside them; but more recently there has grown up a better distributed respect for all the necessary work of the world. Swedenborg regards the daily work as a man's chief medium of service and even of personal growth. In that work each man exercises what skill he has; there he finds his steady opportunity to help, dealing in a commodity wanted of him; there he finds not only opportunity for, but a test of any social concern he feels. Philanthropy, to Swedenborg, is not conclusive evidence of such concern. One's philanthropy has its quality from the honesty and motive of the work which makes it possible. A man cannot be egotist here and altruist there. Dr. Jacks declares that for him the transaction of the day's work is a chief religious exercise. This is the emphasis of Swedenborg's philosophy. To him there is no needed or honest piece of work which is unrelated

to the goal of life. None is too menial to be so related. Each is even "skilled labor" — it is bound to be, if the high goal is elaborated in it.

Swedenborg even offers manuals for the achievement of personal excellence in a given line of work. These ethical manuals are a kind of Hippocratic oath for any occupation. He has something to say of the ministry as one calling, but for the most part he is speaking of ministry in any occupation. He knows no one divine calling. The principles of his manuals would, for example, redirect the lawyer to the pursuit of justice, recall the clergyman from the institutional and sectarian to the spiritual life, put the business man's attention upon serving a "use" above making a profit. His manuals are addressed to the physician, the farmer, the soldier, to every worker, in fact, down to the lowliest. Is the life-work related to a human good *in the workman's purpose?* With what fidelity is the purpose pursued, and the work done? With what reaction upon the worker? Does he emerge a reliable servant of the goal of life? In the discharge of his work in life a man joins the company of the goal. How far removed from Aristotle's outlook is the outlook of the following passage:

> Every human being can be regenerated, each according to his state. Simple and learned are regenerated differently. So are those engaged in different pursuits, and who fill different functions. The variety is infinite. Yet every one can be regenerated.[8]

In our next talk we shall see how realistically Swedenborg means "regeneration."

The goal of life naturally has its significance for the choice of a vocation. There are occupations which,

needless to say, are out of the question, like commercialized vice, or any career which in itself is anti-social. There are young men who will feel that they must hesitate at the manufacture of arms, at military service, at the liquor trade, perhaps at the slaughtering business. But where and if one sees a community good, the way is clear. Still it is not enough to ask whether a piece of work is a community good; is it also the particular person's work? Is it going to engage and call out his especial aptitudes? Is it, as Swedenborg would put the matter, his "use"? Does it mean the fittest development of the man? A man must venture his best. He cannot let lesser considerations than the full acquittal of himself, like quicker or larger remuneration, divert him into an easier or personally less fruitful course. His "use" is not determined simply by reference to the chances for a livelihood. What do the stirring aptitudes and aspirations in him call for in the thing to which he puts his hand? By the nature set in him, he has a particular "use" set for him. If he disregards this kind of call, neither will he have spent his life with satisfaction eventually, nor will he, in what constitutes his major activity, have aimed at the goal. In view of the widespread unemployment, it seems quixotic and even pitiless to press such personal and fastidious questions of choice; in view of the mechanization of toil, it seems doctrinaire to stress the personal development; in view of the heavy and urgent exigencies of self-maintenance, it seems visionary to expect much room for choice; and yet, however this may be at a given time or for a given person, unless there are those who link growth into their best capacities with the work which they choose, never will the

company form in which the goal of life is measurably realized. For that company is a fellowship of tried and eager workmen in all the stuff of life. In so far as such a choice is stifled by conditions, moreover, Swedenborg's philosophy puts a keener edge upon our feeling that there is much to correct in the structure of our society.

On recreation, too, an ethical philosophy will not be silent. Swedenborg's philosophy, with its constant thought for "use," has a good deal to say about leisure and play. He takes no ascetic view of our amusements. But his philosophy not only raises the ordinary question whether leisure is spent in a way to upbuild or damage the individual. It raises the further question whether the leisure is social or anti-social. A financier recently defined the leisure class as composed of those who can employ a maid. This naturally provoked some grim laughter. The common man's definition is very different. To him the leisure class consists of those who play practically the whole year around. To an ethical philosophy, certainly to Swedenborg's, a year-round playtime is a social ailment. The goal of life fades from a society in which some members enjoy unlimited leisure and are not themselves putting a hand to things. They are obviously uncooperative. They hurt the solidarity in human society which the goal spells. Insensitiveness to human need on their part, class-consciousness all around, and a rebellious sense of injustice in the daily worker, break up that solidarity. To ethical thought, recreation is bound to be associated with the creation of something worth while. Swedenborg's philosophy, including in its list of amusements many which have been regu-

larly banned by conventional religion, regards as recreation any which issues in more capable service.*

Some one has said that our basic interests are three—work, and nature (with which we can bracket recreation), and friends. Swedenborg's philosophy has much to say about our human relationships. The company of the goal is an intensely cooperative society. We do not strike out for the goal, each by himself. Current psychological discussion offers much advice on how to manage people, and coaches us in the strategy of handling people. For employer, and political leader, and the promoter of a cause, there is of course a due management of people, requiring shrewd sense, sympathy and tact. No one would think of denying that such management has its place. But when the object is to study human weaknesses and how to avail oneself of them, and to manipulate others in one's own interest, of course the great goal has been disavowed. A psychology of a profounder sort accompanies Swedenborg's philosophy. He deems it the more fundamental and even the more successful quest to find out how to manage oneself in relation to others. Here his key word was bound to be "love," but he would have us understand the word well. Love is not sentiment, or personal liking, or unthinking kindness (if that is kindness). Love is a just and sympathetic dealing which takes account of what the other person is like and of what he, too, is for—especially of the fact that he, too, is a person. It is an attitude taken toward all, toward those we dislike as well as toward

*The one quotation of a proverbial saying which I have found in Swedenborg is that of a Swedish saying, "Idleness is the devil's bolster."

those we like. Nor does it pivot on whether or not they are useful to us, but on the use they are in society. In impersonal dealing with others, injustice is almost sure to be committed; to do the "seeing" thing, or to recognize the other's capabilities and promise, is rather difficult. But this is the mutual sensitiveness of those who belong to the company of the goal. Love takes pains to understand. And how one's life impinges from day to day on another life is included in one's "use." Not only at one's work, but at any time, the mutual influence of the members of the goal tends to bear every life touched, toward the goal. The highest order of "social security" imaginable is to be achieved, with a life functioning where it is meant to be, with its significance there recognized. Swedenborg even pictures the less able of two men who are promoting a cause, as voluntarily giving way to the abler! A lonely enough event on the contemporary scene, even (if not especially) in patriotic service of one's country!

> If a man who has it in his power to attain a high position, sees that another, who also is a candidate, would be more useful to his country, and yields the position to this other man for the sake of the country's good, he has conscience.[1]

The kind of human relationship which Swedenborg visualizes, I have found superlatively illustrated in an historic friendship which matured slowly but for years meant so much to two great spirits. For a long time Schiller felt that he was not even "seen" by Goethe. The time came, however, largely through Schiller's patient courting of his countryman, when these two men of dissimilar mental constitution really saw each other. Schiller again seems to have done the

more towards their recognition of each other, having the greater detachment of outlook. But however that may be, the two poets and dramatists began deeply to aid each other as they appreciated with all sensitiveness the contrasting abilities and gifts with which they were endowed. Each stimulated the other's gifts and growth. On a lesser scale a similar mutuality is possible to any two mortals. It can spread to a whole company, and often has done so. It is the esprit de corps of the company of the goal.

Besides dealing with human relationships in general, Swedenborg deals with particular relationships, as with marriage. The ethical philosopher in Swedenborg stepped out notably in his later theological period when he dealt with the subject of marriage. He himself said that his extensive work on marriage, entitled *Conjugial Love,* is predominantly an ethical discussion. It "does not treat of theology, but chiefly of morals." There is a framework of theology, but ethics is the substance. In that book the subject of marriage and of the relations of the sexes in general has received a detailed treatment and analysis unprecedented in the literature of ethical philosophy. The marriage tie is associated by Swedenborg with the goal of life. Only two partners who mutually and in complementary lives are pursuing that goal, are married in the full sense of the word. Swedenborg's conception of marriage is not readily summarized in a few words. His own words are technical, impersonal and the words of a detached student. But his general view of marriage, or of the tie which is possible, is reproduced — in the warm terms of human hope and aspiration — in Browning's poem "By the Fireside":

Think, when our one soul understands
The great Word which makes all things new,
When earth breaks up and heaven expands,
How will the change strike me and you
In the house not made with hands?

Oh, I must feel your brain prompt mine,
Your heart anticipate my heart,
You must be just before, in fine,
See, and make me see, for your part,
New depths of the Divine!

To Swedenborg, two genuinely married partners, or two between whom there is a growing spiritual union, have kindred places in the company of the goal. No others can achieve such union. They must be, in Swedenborg's peculiar term, "similitudes."

This is sufficiently idealistic. Naturally, too, Swedenborg gives more extended discussion to the spirit than to the form of monogamy. The monogamous spirit, which we only gradually achieve, he calls "the jewel of human life, the depository of the Christian religion." Indeed, he considers it inseparable from true wisdom. Wisdom in living and a true marital love, he says, go hand in hand. The monogamous spirit is chastity, too, to which he gives this positive quality, denying that it consists in inexperience or celibacy. Throughout his book on marriage Swedenborg, like the ethical philosopher, has to do with the purpose and thought and purity or impurity of the human spirit in marriage or, for that matter in a violation of marriage, not with the formal situation.

But this does not mean that he fails to speak a word for the institution of monogamy. He throws his whole weight behind the institution as a hard-won gain of civilization. Monogamy is a necessity not only if the monogamous spirit and chastity are to be achieved;

it is a necessity, too, if the home and an ordered society are to exist. He feels that in the light of the ideal which he sketches — an eternal union of complementary natures — more profound grounds than ever are to be seen for the institution of monogamy.

Nor does his sublime view of the possibilities of the marriage tie mean that he sees no difficulties or contradictions or sorry actualities. To him the majority of ties seem to fall short of real marriage. Even so, he wants no relaxation of the bond, being unwilling to invite social anarchy. Society and the partners are to do their utmost to give the tie permanency. In disappointing and mistaken ties man and wife are even to "simulate" a full love, and make the most of the tie; these "simulations" Swedenborg considers ethical obligations — they are not dissimulations. Along with a searching conception of true marriage, he combines a steadfast adherence to the institution of lifelong monogamy. He describes realistically marriages in which the partners are outwardly friends, but enemies at heart. He discusses divorce. But on this head, too, he is in the realm of ethics, not of law. His "divorce" is the actual, inner disruption of a possible true tie, by the one thing which can destroy such a tie, persistent unfaithfulness. How this position works out for legal divorce, especially in ties that fall short of true marriage, his students have not fully considered. The assumption has been, and the assumption has rarely been questioned, that what he says is in the nature of legislation — that is, that his view on a true tie is what he would have the law be on all marriage ties. But his words, rested on those of the Master in the Gospels, are no more to be taken over bodily as the

civil law of a Christian land than are the Gospel words about the ideal tie and its destruction. The interpreter of Swedenborg seems warranted in the view that, in the face of the discriminations which Swedenborg unweariedly makes among grades of relationships and of disorder, he would as an ethical philosopher appear decidedly on the liberal side in the matter of grounds for civil divorce.

On general questions of sex Swedenborg evinced what is common enough today — frank and unembarrassed willingness to discuss them. He was eighty years old when he wrote upon these questions. He might have made his grand analysis of disordered living, and his classification of grievous and less grievous disorder, upon some other head, though it could not then have had such general significance. Any relationship or common good of life, and the abuses it is open to, is a subject for such analysis; or any one of the ethical commandments among the Mosaic Ten, and the violations visited on it. This is probably too little recognized among his students and readers. I mean that in the book on marriage and notably in its forbidding second part on sexual irregularities Swedenborg offered an amazingly detailed ethical analysis which serves for the examination of any human good and its perversions. He took this particular good — well-ordered sex-life and its realization in marriage, and one evil—mistaken sex-life and its graded perversions, and wrote on these a moral treatise at once dispassionate and compassionate, lighting up the heights and depths of human life in a universal experience of mankind. No other good and evil enter so markedly or universally into human experience.

If one were to gather from the book the general counsel on questions of sex, it would be something like this, I think. In general, Swedenborg counts heavily on two things (besides the spirit of religion) in our attitude to such problems. He frequently stresses the importance of having a satisfactory life-work. Among causes of marital "cold" or indifference he includes the fact that there is no devotion to a pursuit or calling, "whence comes wandering desire."[9] Also it is plain, though it is not so definitely said, that the wholesome sex-life is connected with a general right attitude to other people. I have found these two points tellingly put by Philippe Mairet in an account of Alfred Adler's positions.

> Where life-attitudes to work and to society have been rightly adjusted, this last—the attitude to love—comes right by itself. Where it is distorted and wrong it cannot be improved apart from the others by itself. Although we can think how to improve the social relations and the occupation, a concentration of thought upon the individual sex-problem is almost sure to make it worse. For this is far more the sphere of results than of causes. A soul defeated in ordinary social life or thwarted in its occupation, acts in the sex-life as though it were trying to obtain compensation for the kinds of expression of which it fails in their proper spheres.[10]

Counsel such as this should not be lost from view, as it easily is in so large a book as Swedenborg's. Nothing is plainer than that the upshot of his extended analysis and careful discriminations is just such counsel.

With Swedenborg's philosophy on these questions, there goes a psychology in which sex is a fact of the spirit. No aspect of the total constitution of a man is other than masculine, of the woman other than feminine. It is as true of the mind, of the emotions,

as of the body. That this fact has a bearing on the education suited to each sex, is obvious; also that it has a bearing on the occupations suited to each sex. What that bearing is, Swedenborg is wise enough not to say, for it must vary with circumstances. I do not myself believe that he ever thought that either the fit work or the fit education could be defined once for all. He sketched the round of womanly occupations in his day, but he did not consider these her fixed occupations for all time.

We have seen that Swedenborg's concern with marriage was in part a concern for the home as a unit of society. Inevitably he had much to say about children. We must confine ourselves to a few points in his thought about them. He anticipated the position of the modern church and of modern religious education, that a child has a religious growth and spiritual experience of his own. The child is not to be made ready for an adult religion merely or primarily, but is to be addressed and developed in his own child experience. The foundations of interest in the true goal of life are laid in childhood. They are laid not by adapting adult beliefs to the young mind, but by the strewing in the child nature, by visible and invisible agencies, of childlike pities, impulses of friendship, reverence, and all the little movements of the spirit which are the seedlings of the later growth. Again with the goal of life in mind, Swedenborg considered the child very definitely as an entrustment to his parents, not as their possession. Capacities and gifts are to be sensitively guided, and the child treated as a future member not only of the civil commonwealth but of that higher commonwealth, the company of the goal. In both so-

cieties there is a place which is meant for him. Giving childhood as much spiritual significance as he does, and being outspoken as he is against "possessiveness" on the part of the parent, Swedenborg must inevitably have been against such outright misappropriation of the years of childhood as child-labor entails.

There are some currently debated questions which in one way and another touch the home — like birth control, sterilization of the unfit, and euthanasia. Explicitly Swedenborg faced none of these, as these questions had not then been posed. But a philosophy of life can hardly hope to evade them now. From Swedenborg's philosophy, positions can only be deduced. The deductions will not fall on only one side of any of these questions. In all these problems the instinct of reverence for life asserts itself. Basic in Swedenborg's philosophy is the position that life is not ours. But that is not all that is pertinent to these questions. And it is not to be overlooked that in birth control itself there is regard for life — regard for the life of the mother and regard for the better health and chances of an infant. That is common observation. As for Swedenborg's philosophy, two aspects of it need to be brought into view in addition. One is his position that as life proceeds on this planet, the human being acquires a larger area of self-guidance. A salient feature of his teaching, for example, is the increased stress upon what man must do "on his part" towards life under God. Other areas in which more foresight and reason and particularly control over blind forces, are demanded, are also enlarging. Surgery and the use of anesthetics are both of them exercises of control over life which were opposed at first out of reverence

for life or for the natural order of things. The human being finds means steadily brought to him for extending the area of reasoned self-guidance. Birth control may be a measure of such larger self-help, especially in view of society's exigencies. As for the personal, moral question involved, the second aspect of Swedenborg's philosophy to which we referred is this. In his discussion of marriage Swedenborg certainly does not pronounce for the limitation of bodily congress to procreation. The physical act is related by him rather to the love of two people, for which it has a spiritual value. Both these points have at least to be taken seriously, in trying to deduce help from him on the debatable measure of birth control. Similarly, if we are to look to him on the still more debatable measure of sterilizing the unfit, or on the question of euthanasia; on both of these measures, also, Swedenborg's philosophy is brought to bear only by inferences from general positions. On both, however, it seems to me, Swedenborg's philosophy at least gives warrant to society's power to act toward the collective health of society. In his concept of society as a "larger man," a kind of "planned economy" is involved, of which we shall presently have more to say.

It is one of the glories of Swedenborg's philosophy of life that it has to do with something more than the relation of individual and individual. Society is full of more extended relationships. Since Swedenborg's day there has come not only a consciousness of these larger relationships, but such relationships have been multiplied. There has always been obligation to tribe and class and state and country. But since the eighteenth century, vast organization has come at human hands

in addition to natural larger units in society. We have concerted, corporate action toward common ends — conferences even of nations, international political movements, of course international banking operations, large business combinations, organizations guiding community interests. As though in anticipation of the developments, Swedenborg has much to say about "larger men" than the individual — for so he speaks of every larger unified expression of a life interest and every larger vehicle of human action. Life, he says, has therefore been filled with new allegiances — allegiances which the individual owes to larger "neighbors" and even allegiances which these larger neighbors owe to one another. So he arrives in his own way at Christianity's "social Gospel." He offers a graduated scale of these allegiances, and presents working principles for such conflicts in loyalties as those owing to Christ and country on the question of taking up arms for the latter.

He discusses, first of all, obligations which the individual owes to a larger neighbor, like one's country, or the welfare of mankind at large. In his view, payment of taxes is not just a civic transaction, any more than is a spoils system. In each a relationship to a larger neighbor is involved, with a larger ethical obligation attaching to it. Swedenborg would certainly encourage an employer to consider how mechanization and drudgery crush out individual living and humanness. There is an obligation running from the doctor to the medical profession. There is an obligation on a lawyer's part to the bar. Justice Stone, of the Supreme Court of the United States, had some excellent things to say not long ago[11] on the lawyer's

larger obligations. He pointed out that in the early years of our national existence members of the bar "took more than a perfunctory interest in the social obligations of the profession." He sketched the gradual creeping of the business world and its outlook over the practice of the law. Lawyers are in a measure the victims of this change, which has its counterparts elsewhere in our life. The Justice went on to say: "At its best the changed system has brought to the command of the business world loyalty and a superb proficiency and technical skill. At its worst it has made the learned profession of an earlier day the obsequious servant of business, and tainted it with the morals and manners of the market place in its most anti-social manifestations." The heart of mistakes and faults, the Justice thought, would be found to lie in "the failure to observe the fiduciary principle, the precept as old as Holy Writ, that 'a man cannot serve two masters.' " But what is the individual lawyer to do? How can he follow up his obligation, recognized as an ethical one, in this larger relationship? Justice Stone proposes study and action by the whole group — such study and especially such action as it seems to me Swedenborg's philosophy points to.

Dr. Alfred Adler sketches this moral action in terms pertinent to any profession or industry, in which the conditions distress an individual, who lone-handed can do little to remedy them. After indicating the several courses open — winking at the disorder as an unavoidable contamination; standing for superficial remedies known to be such, and joining with others against the abuse—Dr. Adler (as summarized by Mr. Mairet) remarks,

> It occurs to very few that the right way would be to make alliance on *human* grounds with others in the same predicament and profession, to assert its proper dignity as social service and improve it.[12]

In their duty to a larger neighbor, Swedenborg would say that this is exactly what members of the company of the goal are disposed to do.

When we pass from the ethical obligations owing between an individual and a larger man or neighbor, to the obligations owing between one larger neighbor and another larger neighbor, we must admit that Swedenborg leaves us with implications for the most part. But if the larger units exist, the obligations between them do, also. That is at least an illuminating insistence. If a philosophy does not elaborate these larger duties, as Swedenborg's does not, this bespeaks two things. First, it means that this philosophy is obviously not a body of fixed tenets, but a principle which has extension to conditions. Secondly, the fact is sensibly allowed for that any obligations will form in the course of events. It is no small step forward, however, merely to insist that such obligations exist, and that they must be discovered and met in public life if that larger life, too, is to be part of a Christian civilization. We hear of nations asserting their rights; how often do we hear of them discussing their moral obligations to other nations? We do not hear as much as we should like, of branches of Christendom taking up the subject of what they owe one another in cooperation and mutual assessment. But into these large fields of the moral realm the philosophy of Swedenborg would have "larger neighbors" enter.

In the view Swedenborg takes, there must also be obligations running from larger neighbors, like the

state, to the individual, in this instance the citizen. Yet I am unaware that Swedenborg so much as mentions these particular obligations. Nevertheless they are very much involved in every attempted "planned economy." Plainly, in the general picture offered by Swedenborg's philosophy, there is a place for corporate action on the part of a larger neighbor, in our present instance, the state. We have always had such action, of course, just in the existence of a central government. But the action has been political or governmental, rather than social. Today forms of statehood are arising or are suggested which involve social reorganization, from revolutionary reorganization to studied and scientifically guided. In many of these states, moreover, we are not confronted really with the state, a true larger neighbor, but with individual dictatorship, with a single government administration. But, given a state, the true larger neighbor, what are its duties to the individual? Only something usurping the place of the state, wipes out such obligations. The actual body politic has both a power of collective action and an obligation to minority and individual. Swedenborg's philosophy would not want the larger neighbor to abdicate or to take no collective action; no more could he visualize it devoid of obligations to the citizen. How harmonize collective action, which must sometimes be collective self-compulsion, with personal liberty and individual initiative? I should distrust Swedenborg's philosophy if it had a blueprint or definite directions on this perpetual tension which each state and age must deal with in its time. Is it not enough, and is it not a great deal, if we are alive to two or three things? If, for one, we realize that there

are obligations owing from the state to the individual, and insist that they be observed; and if, secondly, we appreciate that the state, the larger neighbor, has its sphere of collective action; and if, thirdly, we stand upon it, that the individual soul cannot be subordinated to the state, because the individual soul has a larger neighbor still higher than the state — the collective well-being of man, the kingdom of God, or the life of the spirit.

Everywhere in these obligations between larger neighbors, or between large and small, the only guide and spur is the common good, disinterestedly sought. The one hope of progress in Swedenborg's view — a long and patient hope — is the growth of the company of the goal. They are those who care about these obligations, and who study and observe them. The face of things will be changed for the better, not by superficial means, but as refashioning people refashion things. He suggests finer social patterns, but he relies on none except as he relies still more upon the character of the men and women who must initiate and execute them. He is always sensibly aware that "no philosopher's stone of a constitution can produce golden conduct from leaden instincts."[13]

The achievement of the goal involves the remaking of the human being. Of this refashioning, which Swedenborg conceived in realistic psychological terms, we shall speak in our next talk.

We anticipate that subject only to say that to Swedenborg's philosophy the remaking of the human personality is not a magical or mystical process. It is also not to be effected except in the doing of the world's work. Only as a company deals as we have said

with the day's work, with recreation, with love and marriage and human relationships, and only as the company manages to bring into the scope of its efforts the larger relationships of mankind — the dealings of class and class, country and country, race and race — will either personal or social destiny be worked out. For this Swedenborg thought, as we shall see in our fourth talk, that there exist immense resources, many of them not drawn upon at all actively. But, clearly, the goal—high, difficult, towering beyond the earth—is marched toward only in the business of life. There only, in the everyday pursuit of the goal, is any real change in the human fabric to be achieved. Even when he conceived of the remaking of the human being in religious terms, he insisted on this importance of the earth, this ineluctable dealing with everyday life. To Swedenborg the company of the goal lives on into the immortal world, but never did he let this fact lead him into indifference as to what is done on the contemporary scene. Euripides has a line: "Slight not what's near through aiming at what's far." Swedenborg's philosophy commits no such vagary.

In this talk then, we have considered how we settle ourselves upon the present scene in everyday pursuit of the goal. No momentary decision gains that goal. No cloistered striving does. No cherished philosophy compasses the goal, either, except in vision. Only the way in which we deal with the questions, needs, tests and work of life, brings the goal before us in reality or takes us toward it. How do we do our work? Marry? Handle personal problems? Relate ourselves to the next man? Join with our fellows in concerted action to accomplish the common good? Only the mode of life

carries us an inch toward the goal. Over the contemporary scene and through it, Swedenborg's philosophy sees a company moving, now larger, now smaller, winning to the high goal by the way it meets its work, deals with its human relationships, spends its leisure, builds its homes, marries and loves, and pursues its collective social concerns.

III

Adjustment of the Personal Life

THE GOAL of life exerts a hold on us as it presents something within the reach of emulation by us. As conceived in Swedenborg's philosophy, the goal has this power of inspiration. It does not consist in abstractions, or in disembodied qualities, but in a company of men and women achieving those qualities. That company awakens emulation in us; our own goal becomes a place in that society. Some words of Thomas Jefferson's in a letter to a relative will illustrate how arousing and helpful it is to conceive the goal of life so.

> I had the good fortune to become acquainted very early with some characters of very high standing, and to feel the incessant wish that I could ever become what they were. Under temptations and difficulties, I would ask myself what would Dr. Small, Mr. Wythe, Peyton Randolph, do in this situation. . . . Knowing the even and dignified line they pursued, I could never doubt for a moment which of two courses would be in character for them. Whereas, seeking the same object through a process of moral reasoning, and with the jaundiced eye of youth, I should often have erred.[1]

The philosophy which we are sketching is practical from the outset in conceiving the goal of life as a company of men and women who in their integrity, motives and achievements are encompassing the goal and thus rendering it obvious.

In this way the goal of life is not only set within reach, but in the very midst of life. It appears upon the contemporary scene, not off in the distance. Swed-

enborg's philosophy proceeds, as we have seen, to depict the everyday pursuit of the goal, in the round of our ordinary activities and interests. The goal is to be sought in what we do about the daily work, about recreation, about our relationships with one another, about friendship and marriage, about our larger social concerns. It is a goal never completely compassed here, but is to be pursued at once and constantly.

Obviously, so depicted, the goal of life asks more of us than that a work be done and a life spent in pursuit of it. Beyond that, it asks for fit workmen. A work is to be done, indeed, but more important, that work is to be established upon us, in skill, in integrity, in high purpose. Fit workmen are a still more precious requisite. Personal qualification is emphasized. Striking out for such a goal involves what we are striving to be. Actual members of the company of the goal do not merely admire justice, brotherhood, allegiance to the beautiful; they embody these qualities. To find a goal in such a fellowship, we in turn cannot, for instance, seek reforms apart from our own mode of life. We cannot just cast a vote for what we should like to see achieved. The goal being what it is, there is no promotion of it except in participation toward it. We must mean to be part of what we are thinking to contribute to. We cannot make superficially for such a goal; our inner life is involved in the pursuit of it.

A contributor to a New England newspaper has been writing about what he calls a new industry. He grants it is not really new; it is new in the sense that it is a task always to be tried, and in the widespread unemployment of the day it constitutes an effort essential to recovery.

> Many people have been looking hopefully (he says) towards the birth of some new industry. If some new field should open up, as the automobile and radio industries once opened up, or even if home industries should revive to furnish us new occupation, this would unquestionably help solve our national dilemma. Actually this hoped for industry is now at hand, and always has been. The need for it has grown imperative.[2]

With this arresting introduction, and after saying how insufficient lesser industries will be unless the one he has in mind is in the midst of them, Mr. Kitchen describes the new industry as

> The creation of men who are fit to operate the machines they build, to transmit messages worthy of their own great communication systems, etc. This creation of new men must start with ourselves before it can be extended into other lives.

This is putting in another way the thought of that company of the goal of which we have been speaking. Over the goal is written, "Workmen wanted." Not only is there a work to be done on the way to the goal; workmen are to emerge, on whom the work of their hands is established in reliable integrity, social skill and lofty purpose.

What the members of the fellowship of the goal are like in their inner lives, now becomes our topic. Swedenborg's philosophy is as intensely concerned with the inner life of that company as with its conduct of life on the outward scene.

He found men little inclined in his day to consider the seemingly recondite matter of their inner life. He himself was persuaded, like an ancient Greek philosopher, that "An unexamined life is not worth living." To achieve the goal, he thought that a reconstruction must come of the inner life of a man, a re-

fashioning of it really, both emotionally and mentally. But in the middle eighteenth century it was difficult, he thought, to arouse interest in this "creation of new men."

> Today man does not care what is taking place inside him, he is so preoccupied with things outside in which he finds the aim of life. He asks, why should I reflect on the state of the soul or on the state of the interior being, to see if it suffers from obscurity when truth is repulsed or enjoys enlightenment when truth is welcomed? What would it benefit me to know this? I am not even sure that there is an inner man or that there is a state of the soul other than that of the body.[3]

The questions and the disinclination which Swedenborg ascribes to his day, have by no means disappeared at the present day. Still, it can be said that with the popularity of psychology a fresh interest in the self has been aroused. There is a trend in religion, too, towards consideration of the inner life. Whether Swedenborg would today make as sweeping a stricture as he made in 1750, is doubtful. What he has to offer on the reorganization of the inner life is likely at least to find a more hospitable hearing.

We need not fear that his concern with the inner life will lead to overmuch introspection. To the danger of action-killing preoccupation with ourselves, he was quite alive. He does not over-emphasize the rôle of self-scrutiny. What we have found him saying about the everyday pursuit of the goal should make it plain that however intense his concern with the inner life may be, he is also intent on a life which acquits itself well in action.

Besides feeling this wholesome caution, we may also interpose the objection that if the company of the goal is concerned with its inner life, we have slipped

back into an egoistic concern with ourselves. As formerly the individual was exercised over his own salvation, now we have multiplied the egoism, and have a whole company so preoccupied. The objection would be in order if we had in the company of the goal a reward-seeking lot of people. The goal does not spell reward, however; it means a life realized only in disinterested action. This fellowship is seeking a life it does not yet have. It seeks that life at a cost. It seeks it at the cost at least of reordering its instinctive thoughts and desires. It seeks it at the cost of considerable self-discipline. Sometimes it seeks it at the cost of reputation, and even of existence, for martyrs are notable members of the company. By definition the company of the goal is a society of disinterestedly striving men and women, working for something beyond themselves, trying to make real the next possible truth, beauty or goodness. To reduce their effort to a single inclusive one, which will now engage our thought —the company of the goal consists of men and women who are actively ceasing to be self-centered.

At any rate, in his philosophy of life, Swedenborg is intensely concerned with what the members of the company of the goal are like in their inner lives. As fully as he considers the everyday pursuit of the goal, he considers too the psychological adjustments of the personal life for full pursuit of the goal. A certain secularism and a measure of mysticism unite in his philosophy.

We shall again confine our discussion to outstanding ideas in his philosophy.

One of his cardinal ideas is that there must come in our lives a change in what serves as the center about

which we live. The center about which a life first revolves is naturally oneself. The baby in the cradle has a world limited to a few of its possible sensations. It wants food and physical comfort. Its small self is center and circumference of life for some time. Whatever else appears from time to time around it, is blurred with it. And this first center is long occupied innocently enough. But the unfolding of life steadily leads away from it. Other selves, right in the family, have to be reckoned with shortly. Life has a wider extent than was evident at first. Adjustment comes slowly, or fails to be made. Many cases which are brought to the psychologist are cases in which the boy or the girl has persisted in the infantile outlook. The young patient is trying to get his own exclusive way with brothers and sisters and playmates, by capitalizing, for example, his pains and weaknesses. The adult, too, who, by one subterfuge or another, avoids the responsibilities of society and wants to be carried by it, is persisting in the infantile self.

There is no need, however, to look for egocentric behavior in abnormal conduct. Behavior dominated by the small self is general. Ordinary conceit is a common instance. To the conceited mind, no wide-stretching realm of knowledge is present; its own ideas suffice it. The manipulation of other persons in our own interest is another egocentric manifestation. Feeling and thought proceed always in terms of how we ourselves are affected; other persons are not visualized as persons, but as impersonal means to us. Local pride is often a communal betrayal of the small center of self. The elder Holmes remarked, "The axis of the earth sticks out visibly through each and every town and

city." The interests of a class, the claims of employer and employee, the interests of litigants in courts, are too generally the urgent demands of the small center of self over which a larger interest must be invoked. The small self continues to be clamant even in the field of national and international life, of course: the plural "we" can be as exclusive as the singular "I." Writing of basic delusions in international life, some one has said:

> Briefly summarized they are: that our nation loves peace while the others are addicted to violence; our armament is for defense only, never for attack; our war is a righteous war, we, of course, being on the side of right; the thing we want and which our neighbors have is a vital necessity; the motives for our conduct are noble; our neighbor is to blame for our harsh treatment of him, and the grand and glorious finale, Our nation, in its splendid qualities, stands above every other nation in the world. Our people has the truer substance, our life runs deeper and with a purer flow.[4]

These instinctive feelings, usually subconscious, are the small self persisting still on a grand scale. Even in the world of religion, the native self persists. We have partisan denominationalism to examine, if we do not think so; also the arrogance of the idea that "our" church is the sole abode of truth; and ever with us is the stubbornly tenacious idea of a "chosen people" or elect group. Some hymns actually sung are not too violently satirized in the parody:

> We are God's chosen few,
> All others will be damned.
> There is no place in heaven for you —
> We cannot have heaven crammed.[5]

All of this native philosophy of life — for it is a mode of address to which we are born and which we

do not readily revise even in maturity — may be called Ptolemaic. We have then no commanding center of life valid for all men, around which their lives and our own might better travel. The good earth of our small self, however magnified, is the center of the system. To life so restrictedly centered, whether by default or actively, the philosophy of Swedenborg cries, "Decentralize!"

Swedenborg may seem distressingly clear-sighted in finding the small self ubiquitous in our lives; his own term for it is the "proprium" or what is one's "own." But, on the other hand, the emergence of a larger self, or of a more deserving center for a life to gather about, is in his view as natural to us as the small self is native to us. That more deserving center appears slowly in actuality. It is none too clear in practice at times, even though it may be fairly plain in the abstract or to thought. Yet a more valid center for human life and feeling is often present to us when we think not. We defer, for instance, to truth. That is, instead of maintaining present opinion and persisting in our outlook, we hold our ideas to be revisable. They are no norm, but must answer to what we can find out, and to this there is no end. Our mental life is then revolving about the true center, whether we appreciate the fact or not; that center consists, for one thing, in truth beyond ourselves. The home readily becomes a larger center to the growing child, the happiness and usefulness of it pivotal with him. The service which a man's work can be in the community, once seen by him, gives him a cause beyond the immediate necessities of his daily work, and beyond himself. Large enterprises, involving thousands of work-

ers, and producing a commodity which becomes the dependence of multitudes, seem more likely to take a man out of himself and into service to others than to leave him to labor on his own sole account. In ways without number a man's self tends to be socialized. Moreover, it is life which fetches into sight in some way the true center of our lives. That center even emerges on us in a motion of its own, as well as in commoner ways than we think. As it does so, a Copernican philosophy like Swedenborg's is urgent to cry, "Centralize life now with a will about that worthy center!" For to him the true Sun of life is rising then upon the human spirit. As far as I know, Swedenborg never used the verb "orient," and so could not have said that a man's life is "well oriented"; but he did regard the true center of life as the *East* of the human spirit — in whatever truth beyond oneself or greater good one may find his governing center, Swedenborg recognizes the Author of life.

Of this gradual progress of life away from the small center of self to a larger or socialized self, Swedenborg has much to say. To him it is a psychological reconstruction of the inner life, the only actual "regeneration." How may it be helped or speeded? Especially if a more socialized center for thought and life at first is dim, as it is ordinarily? According to Swedenborg's philosophy, the great alteration is best of all speeded by a certain adult realization. It depends particularly upon seeing through a persisting illusion. We seem to have life in ourselves, or, as Swedenborg says, "of ourselves." To all appearance we do our own living, on energies stored up in us. We are our own property. This sensation that we exist "of

ourselves" is a distorting lens through which we look out on life. It gives the small center of self every warrant to persist. President DeWitt Hyde seems to me to be speaking of this illusion of separate existence and some of its worst effects in what he says of the "illusion of selfishness."

> This illusion of selfishness is the most subtle and insidious foe of man's spiritual life. Unless we can get outside of ourselves and into a realization of the lives of others, we do not live a spiritual life at all. We do not enter the world of persons; and our own personality, thus bereft of true spiritual companionship, shrivels and withers and dies. Continual contact with mere things, and with persons who are thought of and treated as mere things, tends to reduce us to mere things ourselves.[6]

But how are we to see through this illusion and avoid its shrivelling effects? The sensation or feeling that we have our lives to live for ourselves, Swedenborg grants, is persistent. Inevitably we feel our lives to be our own. Our separate consciousness will always be attended by the feeling that we live, as it were, in our own right. Swedenborg even grants that this feeling is heightened as we live rightly. But reason and reflection are at hand, he believes, to correct the persisting sensation. Serving especially to correct the feeling that we are "our own," is the full, adult appreciation that as a matter of fact we *must* be finite organisms, gifted with life from the one Source of life. Furthermore, we are not only lent life from the beginning by the One Being who is Life; there is always fuller life for any of us beyond our present reaction or measure of welcome to it. Once let this mature reflection become seated in the thought, and our outlook on life is freed from the chains of the small self.

But now, when the mature man has brought this

point of view real to himself, he has only acquired a point of view — a vision. Then comes the business of establishing this outlook in his life. He may indeed have been led, as we have indicated, by some self-sacrificing love or in some self-forgetful allegiance, to this very point of view without consciously recognizing it. But even so, then comes the need for elaborating life around the true center, on choice after choice, on desire after desire. The body of thought and desire will tend to cling to the infantile center or the small self. Intolerance or tolerance, opinionativeness or hospitality to new ideas, self-assertion or firm conviction, tyranny or responsible action — there is one or the other as we yield to the instinctive small self or achieve some relation to a true center valid for us and others. It may be too much to hope that suitors at law shall be intent on arriving at justice, and social classes submit their clashing interests to a larger good, and nations theirs to a common advancement of mankind — yet it is only then that the small self, asserting itself on a large scale, is forsaken. This sort of remaking of life is little by little; it is also lifelong. Only One has ever said, "It is finished." For the rest of us it is a victory if we have begun in good earnest to achieve this new "style" of life, as the psychologist would call it. To this manner of psychological reconstruction of the human being Swedenborg applies the time-honored words "regeneration" and "rebirth"; and with Browning he thinks that the present existence has been honored if the process has begun.

He fixed thee 'mid this dance
Of plastic circumstance,
This present, thou, forsooth, would fain arrest,

Machinery just meant
To give thy soul its bent,
Try thee, and turn thee forth, sufficiently impressed.[7]

Again it becomes obvious that Swedenborg's philosophy of life is a religious one. The process which we have been describing is more than an ethical culture. The true center which is dawning upon life is at length identifiable with the Divine. And that center is beginning to exert its attraction upon us. It is that center which is rotating our life about it. If not, we have the spectacle once more of an earth propelling itself about the sun; our philosophy has lapsed and reverted to the Ptolemaic. The centripetal power can only belong, however, to the true center. Influences from God alone can accomplish the psychological reconstruction of which we have been speaking. An ethical culture not also religious leaves us after all to ourselves. What is to rotate us away from graceless life, indifference, the envies, hatreds, intolerances and other pieces of self-centered living, except the Sun of righteousness? We feel the impetus away from the small self only as the true center engages our thought and purpose, and as we welcome its universal sway. So Swedenborg's philosophy argues for the necessity of religion. The true center is religion's disclosure. The establishment of that center in the firmament of our aspiration and experience is religion's work. From the point of view of Swedenborg's philosophy, the spirit and the guidance of religion are indispensable for any real remaking of human life.

Religion comes into the picture from another angle, also. The advance out of the small self into the larger or socialized self, is not made without struggle.

We have indeed spoken of it as natural, in the sense that the unfolding of life invites it. But to the small self the change is not enrichment, but encroachment. It is its defeat and death. It resists. So there enters very definitely into Swedenborg's philosophy that moral struggle which in our first talk we cited as a leading feature of deeply lived human life. The moral struggle fills life. The true center sweeps life with its powerfully attracting tides and forces; everywhere false small centers resist in the endeavor to maintain themselves. Each center seeks to consolidate our individual world about it. The battle is mankind's, not a small wrestling of our own. It is egoism to think it peculiarly our batttle. Any genuine moral and spiritual struggle which falls to our small lot is a piece of a much greater and portentous struggle. We are fighting a world of small selves when we fight our own. Paul gave that world a fearful reality when he said,

> For ours is not a conflict with mere flesh and blood, but with despotisms, the empires, the forces that control and govern this dark world: the spiritual hosts of evil arrayed against us in the heavenly warfare.[8]

On the other hand, the true center is actively asserting its sway; where the small center is contriving a world contracted, dark and rebellious, the true center is extending a world generous, luminous, constructive. The members of the company of the goal have entered on this cosmic enterprise. They are participants in an eternal moral and spiritual struggle. They are products of it. One of their resources, as we shall try to see further in our final talk, is religion, and all the realities of religion.

There is no need, after this, to stress the fact that

self-examination is needed for the psychological reconstruction of the human being. It is in the spirit of Swedenborg's philosophy to welcome as an aid to self-scrutiny every technique which psychology can furnish. For understanding ourselves, psychology has given us much; still there may be no inclination to assess ourselves conscientiously. It is religion which has always furnished the necessary impetus. Luckily this earnestness of religion is far older than psychological techniques. In days of old, members of the company of the goal knew how to be critical of themselves, and were critical of themselves. As workmen in the general stuff of life they wanted to handle their aims well, keep their thinking responsible, watch the set of their spirit. No more now than then, do they expect to be good workmen in life without self-discipline. They expect it no more than the artist expects to perfect himself without constant self-criticism. It is this sober self-knowledge inspired by religion, which Swedenborg's philosophy stresses. He studies self-examination, and distinguishes an easier and a more difficult. The more difficult may not be for everybody. This is a real introspection, falling upon the very intentions and motives; not every one can find his way in this maze of the inner life. The less exacting self-scrutiny falls upon what we are prompted to do, as this is to be caught in contemplated action. At least so much as this, he feels, must be present in "every life worth living."

Swedenborg's philosophy, we have seen, is accompanied by its own psychology. This whole adjustment of the personal life means a psychology. But in addition, Swedenborg retained from his philosophical

period much else in the province of psychology. The spiritual life never in his view is the same for all. It not only varies with the individual. It is realized on different levels and by types. Each person is a type, mentally and emotionally, in respect of the spiritual life. There are those whose entrance upon the life of the larger self is by intuition and instinct and the prompting of the heart. There are those who enter on that life by grasp of its principles. Self-knowledge, in his view, can be so intimate as to appreciate which is the type of one's own spirit. Of whichever type one is, in addition one finds a particular level of effort his forte. Sensitiveness — actual sensitiveness to a felt Divine love — is an exceedingly high pitch of motivation for the human spirit; it is an easier, yet still exalted, level to be moved by genuine consideration for the next man; and conformity to what is regarded as the Divinely informed purpose of life or to what is considered the will of God is the broad level upon which most lives which master the small self are likely to move. Individuals may be said to have a size, spiritually, which is scarcely more alterable than physical stature. In this respect there is something of the inexorable or of the "given" in even the depths of our possibilities. We do come to rest somewhere in the scheme of things which is not of our making; there is a place for which we are fashioned. There are aspirations which the spirit, uncritical of itself, can entertain foolishly and futilely, and which can only be pretensions, and lead to a mock religious experience. Swedenborg's philosophy presses all possible objectivity upon us, so that we shall become what it is given us to become.

Besides this objectivity about ourselves, there is a certain other detachment which his philosophy urges. This is a kind of reverence for life—a reverence which grows out of the realization that we are organisms, not generating or harboring life, but gifted with life. We are to hold away from ourselves, as something not ourselves, all that is true and fine, else we spoil it. This feeling prevents integrity from turning to self-righteousness, for example. The attitude extends, however, just as well to what is depraved and evil. While this may make an appeal to us and indeed stir in us, it is warrantably regarded as alien to us. Strength comes from so regarding it. If we deem the evil ours, capitulation has begun. We are making an unnecessary identification of ourselves with it. We lose a point, and cripple our capacity to deal with it. This attitude in general naturally accompanies any vision of the conflict which fills life—a conflict which is not ours, though we add our small weight on one side or the other, and which is waged by powers far beyond us. As the psychologist says, something in the unconscious is winning for us. This psychology of Swedenborg's philosophy was later to appear in definite religious doctrine, in such statements as that the man who thinks he fights in his own strength meets defeat, while the man who realizes that the Divine fights the battle in general, is carried to victory. That theological teaching rests plainly upon a previous psychology and philosophy.

Throughout, in our reproduction of Swedenborg's philosophy of life, the reality of human free will has been assumed. From the first Swedenborg as a philosopher contended for the reality of human moral

choice. The argument was the easier for him because he saw the human being as he did — as a finite organism, played upon by the influences of life; "free choice" consists therefore in deciding what the character, even the moral character, of one's reaction to these influences shall be. Were there more than this control of reaction, the argument might be more difficult to maintain; but to the reality, as well as to the basic need of such free choice, our philosoper clung from the first, and as a psychologist. Later, in the theological days, he was greatly to elaborate his teaching, and marshal new arguments for it as well as explanations of it, but free will was accorded many substantial pages by him in his *Soul; or Rational Psychology.*

Let me conclude this talk about personal adjustments with two more main points of characteristic importance in Swedenborg's philosophy.

The one point is his conviction that every individual life tends inevitably to some unity. No life remains scattered or a thing of odds and ends and contradictions forever. It gets assembled sooner or later around some governing purpose. In Swedenborg's view, life (not merely physical animation, but the life of the personality) is love. Every interest, even an intellectual one, is a form of love. Eventually some one love becomes the "ruling love." This idea of a "ruling love" in every life was to play a large part in Swedenborg's religious doctrines, but it is an idea toward which his psychology and philosophy had steadily traveled. Of possible "ruling loves," Swedenborg recognized four in general. Two attach to the socialized self — they are regard for the true center of life, the Author of life, and regard for the neighbor as for one's self. Two

attach to the subordinated self — self-regard, and acquisitiveness. Some form of one of the first two is the governing impulse in a well-ordered life; some form of one of the latter two is the ruling love in a disordered life. Swedenborg was therefore unable to see good and evil side by side in a person; one of these is deeper than the other and a qualification of it. The person is what the ruling love is, however that may be contradicted by traits and deeds which are anomalies. The lack of unity as yet, only means that the ruling love has not extended its sway fully. (This view falls in with another characteristic view of Swedenborg's. Throughout he is convinced of the centrality of the will in human personality. The will makes the man; only those mental possessions are genuinely a part of him which he has a will for, or which are enacted with a will. It is a severe view, likewise doing away with the balancing of good and bad in us to strike an average.)

In the men and women whom Swedenborg sees in the company of the goal, ruling loves have been changed from the lower set, to speak so, to the higher. The lower loves — a proper self-regard and a due prizing of the things of the world, continue; but they are subordinated. This philosophy eventually gives Swedenborg's religious teachings the balance and sense of proportion which they exhibit. He teaches no abnormal renunciations of the world, no ascetic self-torment; the self is not to be slain, in his view, but transformed, and utilized for something beyond it. We look to religion to give life a scale of values and proportion; but religion itself has too often been ill-balanced. That Swedenborg's religious teachings themselves have

proportion and balance was provided by his psychology and philosophy.

Still more to be emphasized, especially in connection with the company of the goal, is the second, concluding point.

It has become evident before this that Swedenborg thinks of the human personality as a substantial organism. In the psychological reconstruction which we have tried to sketch, a substantial organism is being refashioned. We are prone to think of desire and thought, and even of purpose and traits of personality, as something fluid and fugitive. To Swedenborg they are as dependable activities of a structure as vision is of the eye. Mind and will are two aspects of the same organic structure; thought and volition are activities of it. The structure undergoes one manner of upbuilding or another. It will then behave in one way or another. It will respond to one stimulus and ignore another. It answers a tragic situation with pity or with hardness. It avidly absorbs a bribe dangled before it, or does not so much as see it. These responses become habits of a structure. Actually built in one way or the other, the structure of personality can be counted upon to behave accordingly. That is, this is the possibility before us, or the final outcome. A man does not forever remain a being who can do both the bad and the good. He becomes an embodiment of one or the other manner of life. Just to be prompted on occasion to do the just and merciful thing, is little; as Swedenborg says, the evil man can do good. But there is a development possible which produces the tried workman who can only do good. He is so fashioned in the whole structure of his personality. He has become the

embodiment of a life which is a serviceable and social life. Conceiving human beings, to begin with, as organic forms gifted with life from beyond themselves, Swedenborg goes on to think of them at their best as rich incarnations of this life. The terms he uses are so homely we do not appreciate the sublimity of his view. He calls the finished personality "a receptacle of truth," "a form of charity." Actually he is regarding it as an incarnation of a life which streams from the Divine.

All the members of the company of the goal are in Swedenborg's view such incarnations of the good and the true. How very different this is from superficial psychological adjustment to difficulties of temperament, to frustrated tendencies, and what not! Here is a philosopher with a thorough belief in the remaking of human nature. It is the mystic's confidence that one can in the humblest fashion as well as in a striking way become the tool of Divine life. At least it means the adjustment of the whole man to the world as a whole, so that the meaning of life is captured by him in his due measure. Nothing less satisfies the hunger of a thinking and striving soul. We are back to our first reflection — that there is no promotion of the true goal of life unless we participate toward the goal, unless we embody in ourselves what it stands for to us.

> And I knew now that what I hungered after in my best years was neither knowledge, nor honor, nor riches; nor to be a priest, or a great creator in steel; no, friend, but to build temples; not chapels for prayers or churches for wailing penitent sinners, but a temple for the human spirit in its grandeur, where we could lift up our souls in an anthem as a gift to heaven.[10]

IV

Some Tangible Resources

WE HAVE considered the goal of life as pictured and realized in a company of men and women who embody in themselves such goods as truth-seeking, a sense of justice, social concern. Such a company, indefinable but influential, is the leaven deep in every civilization; it always has been and always will be. In other words, the goal of life, so conceived, towers up in the past as well as in the future. Would a goal of life impress us as real if it did not rise high enough for us to see it, whether we looked back over history or looked forward?

Next we looked out and around us, to see how the ever recruiting company conducts its everyday pursuit of the goal. That company may survive (Swedenborg is confident it does) to live upon another scene, but it is fashioned here in the transaction of the ordinary round of human interests and activities.

And in our third talk, we looked inward, asking what the members of the fellowship of the goal are like in their inner lives. Obviously there must be personal qualification for that fellowship. It is not occasionally that these men and women contribute to society's well-being; they are increasingly incarnations of the justice, the social concern, the principles of integrity which they profess.

Now, we look up, to see what resources this com-

pany possesses, upon which to draw in its efforts and achievements. How are its aims sustained?

As we have tried to bring the goal of life before us, as we have tried to see how that goal is pursued in the whole round of our ordinary work and interests, and even as we scanned the inner life, motives and transforming experiences, of the company of the goal, we naturally let emphasis fall upon the initiative and self-help of these men and women. Each and every one of them is obliged to discern the goal of life in some way for himself. Each must pursue it as best he can, on the questions and needs which he meets and in the life-work to which he puts his hand. In his own way each must welcome and experience the psychological reconstruction which carries him out of the isolated into a social self. So far the emphasis has fallen mainly upon self-help.

And yet we are not left to ourselves. We have abundant resources, some tangible and some intangible, for the confident and buoyant pursuit of the goal. In the detection and delineation of these resources, no philosophy of life is more comprehensive or more helpful than that which we have been trying to outline. In our present talk we want to examine these resources and to come, if possible, even to a lively sense of them, or at least some of them.

Before considering the resources which we have in mind, however, I should call attention to an especial and excellent help which Swedenborg's philosophy gives us in this connection. This is the way in which he very happily links together our self-help and our reliance upon extra-human resources. How to balance and blend these two is a question which has always

confronted the exercise of the human will. Not only individual lives but whole civilizations have been built more upon the one accent, of self-help, or more upon the other emphasis, of reliance on extra-human resources. Yet a life, or a civilization, is conceivable achieved in a balance and fortunate blend of the two accents.

The Hebrew culture stressed characteristically our reliance upon extra-human resources. We have the accent in the words of a Psalm:

> Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.[1]

Christianity naturally continued to sound this note; the emphasis is inseparable from religion.

> Without Me, ye can do nothing.[2]
> I am the vine, ye are the branches.[3]

Of the other accent, upon self-help, as that marked an entire civilization, doubtless the finest example is the classic Greek culture. We have in that culture not just the untutored self-help to which human nature is prone anyway, but a disciplined and principled self-help, which flowered in one of the world's commanding civilizations, rich in art, philosophy, political theory, and even in a scientific spirit of inquiry. Built upon the employment of human resources to the utmost, that civilization proved well-nigh self-sufficient.

As Christianity moved out into the Gentile world, of course it met the accent in full influence in the Greek civilization. But Christianity, in its own Gospel, had already sounded this note of self-help, too.

> Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?[4]

Parables like that of the Talents laid a strong accent upon human enterprise in the things of the spirit.

From the first, Christian thought and life have striven to relate and proportion the two accents, separately stressed by two cultures from which it inherited, the Greek and the Hebrew.

In his turn, at long last, Swedenborg addressed himself to achieving a balance and linking of the two emphases. One of Emerson's criticisms of Swedenborg, it is true, was that he was too Hebraic. He had Swedenborg's theological thought in mind, I believe. But even in that field of thought Swedenborg criticized the propensity of his day to leave all to God. He said that the prevalent Christian teaching could be summed up as "omnipotentism"—an impossible exaltation of God's power to do all, combined with a passive dependence upon it. Self-help by man was deprecated in orthodoxy, even omitted by it; indeed, the idea was abroad that the human being was altogether powerless to do anything toward having the life of the spirit. To Swedenborg's philosophy, however, the only possible course was by our own activity to evoke the Divine power. Self-help was stressed by him much as it is in Angela Morgan's stirring verses, entitled "God Prays":

These things shall be, these things shall be,
Nor help shall come from the scarlet skies,
Till the people rise!

Till the people rise my arm is weak;
I cannot come till my people speak;
When men are dumb, my voice is dumb—
I cannot come until my people come....

They are my mouth, my breath, my soul!
I wait their summons to make me whole.

On the other hand, Swedenborg would have been the last person to overlook reliance upon extra-human resources. He would have criticized humanism today as severely as he did "omnipotentism" then. In humanism the accent falls too exclusively on reliance in human powers. Now it is the extra-human resources which are overlooked. Along with its hospitality to the Greek emphasis, Swedenborg's philosophy also keeps the Hebraic emphasis.

To give the human spirit a balanced address to life, Swedenborg's philosophy combines the two contending accents by a simple enough means. He forges the link which enables them to travel arm in arm, with the little word "as." We are indeed to act and we are to do our utmost, too,—his is a "do-your-part' philosophy; but we are to do this "as" of ourselves, in other words, drawing upon resources beyond ourselves and recognizing the fact that we do so.

But now, what are some of these resources? We can hope to consider only a few.

Does it seem odd to include nature among them? What help does the physical environment give with moral effort? How does it cooperate with the enterprise of the company of the goal? There is the generally recognized aid to be had from a sound physical body.

> Let us cry, 'All good things
> Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now, than flesh helps soul!'[8]

In something more than the ordinary prosaic way, and in the light of definite theories of "sound flesh and sane soul in coherence," Swedenborg recognizes the

spiritual values of a sound physical organism. But those values are enjoyed by each man within the bounds of his individual being. How does nature at large abet moral effort? Generally we regard her as neutral in moral issues. She is no kinder or more lenient to the good man than to the bad. Her forces work indifferently to the integrity or lack of integrity in a man; her laws are the same for all. Swedenborg seizes upon this very fact as a condition allowing for the enterprise of the company of the goal. The neutrality of nature makes room for disinterested moral effort, for unforced choices by the human will. This particular resource is a negative one, and yet real. It amounts to this, that the external environment does not compel the human will one way or the other; it does not speak incontrovertibly of the things of the spirit, either of their reality or of their unreality. Furthermore, Swedenborg's philosophy makes something of the rigidity as well as of the moral neutrality of the physical world. The first world in which human life is cast, he says, must be an inert world, with an inexorable fundamental order, to which man's life must be conformed, and by which his living is even guided. There must be a lowermost fixed plane to which life is to react, while the unformed and plastic soul of man by free choices receives its "bent" and achieves a settled and persisting character of its own. The order of nature can be securely built upon by the human spirit in achieving a sound order in its own inner life.

The general serviceableness of nature for pursuit of the goal extends beyond this neutrality and rigidity to a third item. We are in the habit of saying that nature is indifferent to the individual. Nature's inter-

est, we say, is rather in the species; she is not so careful of the individual. But according to Swedenborg's philosophy, there is just as truly no magnifying of the individual in the goal of life, which is realized in a society in which the individual hardly looms larger than he does in nature's eyes. Nature teaches the humility practised by that society. As for nature's dominant concern with the perpetuation of the species, that is quite in line with the fact that the goal is a society from the human species, with as many members as may be, who shall bring out its infinite possibilities.

We turn next to more positive resources — resources we have in the way in which human society is arranged, or in what we may call the framework and furniture of human existence. Here there are many more resources for the pursuit of the high goal than we are likely to be conscious of. Our existence is far better arranged for achieving the goal of life than we usually realize. In the home, for example, and in the family, an impetus inheres to draw us out of the individual self into a socialized self. Home and family are a miniature cooperative society. In the company of the goal, such a society is spread to civilization at large. Pursuit of the great goal is also suggested in our life-work. A service to the community is involved in the daily work, which can inspire social concern in the workman. Again, the earth is stocked with causes beyond oneself — in education, art, public life, the battle with disease, the attractive development of a city, industrial justice. Still again, a society such as that of the goal is being steadily suggested in the network of human relationships — by our interdependen-

cies we tend to be thrust toward ends in life which matter to all. New and larger neighborhoods are being swept together in the modern world. Confronted by them, we are being invited to develop the spirit of neighborliness on a corresponding scale. Thus the home, and the daily work, the realization of the next possible liberty or justice, the beckoning of international amity, all these have it in them to provoke that exchange of smaller for wider self which is characteristic of the company of the goal. All contain pointers to the high goal. Nor can we forget that life, and not dint of thought or philosophy, is the awakener to the purpose of life. It is life with its exigencies, its joys and heartaches, its defeats and its tax upon the last skill of which we are capable, which lets us see what is wanted of us. In the way in which our existence is put together, and in the way in which life spends itself, there are endless resources for discerning and pursuing the goal. Life is arranged with relevance to the supreme goal. It serves the goal if this is what we have been taking it to be — a society of tried men and women — such "conscripts of the good" that they embody in themselves life's truest values.

Our subject is tangible resources, but we must mention some intangible resources, for Swedenborg's philosophy makes much of them. These are mental and moral influences of which the world is full. Up to a point, we may illustrate what we have in mind by the influences which still exert themselves upon the modern world from ancient Greece or Rome, as well as from ancient Judea. Heritages from all these ages operate still in our world of thought and action. They are like the light which is still reaching us from a star

which has disappeared. Still, as we said, these influences illustrate only up to a point the others of which we want to speak. For these others emanate from existing, if unseen, sources. To Swedenborg the whole of our mental and moral world is swimming with influences. Life sweeps the universe not only in the processes of vegetable growth and in the animation of all living creatures, but in what we know as impulses and mental energy. This is as true of the world of the spirit as that the natural world has its elemental energies and forces. We are immersed in an invisible ocean of mental and moral influences. The life sweeping the universe washes the shores of our own being. Each life is a pool joined to the great ocean. We know far too little of this unseen environment; we rarely consider how extensive it may be. Yet every day we draw upon it more or less well, and respond to it well or poorly. What we call our own life is a body of reactions to all the stimuli which reach us in the processes of a world so replete with life. The consciously directed mental life is a small part of that body of reactions. Beyond conscious reaction there are many movements in us, not only of physical life but of impulse and mental animation, of which we are unaware.

Obviously in such a world we have more to draw upon in the way of stimulus and reenforcement than we ordinarily think. In general, the operation of it on us is, as we have intimated, beyond our consciousness. Yet in the course of life and events, even that operation stands revealed. Of this, Dean Wicks seems to me to give a good illustration when he makes the following statement in his book, *The Reason for Living,*

> Our ordinary life is made up of two parts; that which we do, and the unexpected results which follow in the margin of surprise. There, for example, is a man doing his work faithfully, measuring up to everything which is asked of him; and then in the margin of surprise, the opportunities which keep seeking him out without his seeking them, and the leading of life into avenues of service that one never planned in advance.[9]

The Dean appears to me to be referring still more directly to the personal or human influences which Swedenborg's philosophy sees filling the world, when he speaks of the "life-giving, truth-revealing, beauty-making, personality-producing activity going on all about us."[7] To this, he adds, all our living is a matter of relating ourselves. Not only have we resources in these influences, but their existence and activity mean to Swedenborg that we are being utilized by an ultimate Purpose — we are being handled towards the established ends of life. Swedenborg also find dehumanizing and destructive forces among these influences; but in battle with these are myriad influences which are elevating, humanizing and constructive.

I should like to help myself from another book to make the general fact a little plainer. In his *Man, the Unknown,* Dr. Carrel has many provocative things to say, couched in arresting terms, about the frontiers of the human personality.[8] As he puts it, there is an extension of thought and of emotion beyond our physical or anatomical frontiers. Well, it is precisely such extension of thought and of affection that constitutes the influences with which, according to Swedenborg, the non-physical world is replete. In his view, such influences can have only persons for their source, at least for their mediate source, just as persons alone can appreciate them. They may be unseen persons,

and the influences may be the operation of the unseen world. Swedenborg calls the extended thought and feeling the "sphere" of the person. So he depicts the extended thought and feeling or influence of the Supreme Being Himself. Thus, in a remarkable passage in which he employs this philosophy of the world for the statement of his theology, he says:

> There is actually a sphere proceeding constantly from the Lord, filling the entire spiritual and natural worlds, which raises all toward heaven. It is like a strong current in the ocean which unobservedly draws a vessel along. All who believe in the Lord and live according to His precepts enter that sphere or current and are elevated.[6]

An honored preacher and philosopher has pictured the living influence of the Christ in a different but not unrelated figure of speech:

> As the dash of the waves will hollow out some little indentation on the coast, and make it larger and larger, until there is a great bay, with its headlands miles apart, and its deep bosom stretching far into the interior, and all the expanse full of flashing waters and leaping waves, so the giving Christ works a place for himself in a man's heart, and makes the spirit which receives and faithfully uses the gifts which He brings, capable of more and more of Himself, and fills the widened space with larger gifts and new grace.

The company of the goal is made up of men and women who draw upon the resources they have in these myriad influences which fill life. They realize that they must prefer one mental and emotional world to another, make their place in it, and become part of it. Life can be richly and well communicated to them, or distortedly in those contracted, self-regarding forms which evil living always exhibits.

But our subject is more especially our tangible

resources. Those of which we have just spoken are admittedly of the most intangible kind. Still we shall see that they only reappear in the tangible resources which Swedenborg enumerates. Neither life nor a good philosophy of life can throw off the influences, good and bad, with which the moral realm is replete.

More than one philosopher, as for example, Spinoza, has at length felt that he must take account of the Bible. So Swedenborg did, still in his philosophical period. While he was engaged with philosophical aspects of scientific problems, he not only was a theist; he also had a definite place in his scheme of thought for the Scriptures. Utterance of Himself by the Supreme Being, if He has a purpose for the race, is inevitable, philosophically regarded. So Swedenborg thought. We have already quoted a passage from his *Economy of the Animal Kingdom,* a work written in his pre-theological days, in which he speaks of the City of God—one of his designations of what we have been calling the fellowship of the goal. We quote this passage now for what it has to say of Scripture:

> The most general law of the citizens [of the city of God] is that they love the neighbor as themselves and God more than themselves . . . The Holy Scripture is the code of rules for obtaining the end by the means. These rules are not so dark or obscure as the philosophy of the mind and the love of self and the world would make them; nor so deep and hidden but that any sincere soul which permits the spirit of God to govern it, may draw them from this pure fountain—pure enough for the service of the members of the city of God over all the earth.[10]

Readers of Swedenborg's later books may well feel surprise at his regarding Scripture as a code of rules. By and large, the Bible contains few rules; and rules,

like those for the regulation of Israel's early society, are transient regulations; the Bible is full rather of truths and principles, which are undying. Nevertheless, so Swedenborg speaks of Scripture at first, obviously having in mind under rules the broad precepts of love in Scripture. Later, he has a far more vital way of speaking of the Scriptures. They become in his view much more than a body of information in the things of the spirit, even more than a body of inspiring truth. Seen in the light of his philosophy of a spiritual-natural universe which is pervaded by the influences from God of which we have just spoken, the Scriptures become the vehicle of such influences — the medium of the currents of life. Above all, they seem to him a channel for that upward tending tide of which he speaks in the quotation taken from *True Christian Religion.* As he sees it, the Scriptures do not merely make mention of redeeming and saving influences, and of a Holy Spirit abroad in life; they mediate these influences to human lives which are open to them. They bring the vast ocean of truth and saving influence into our small bays of reception.

I should like to allow myself a remark upon Swedenborg's interpretation of Scripture. He pursued this interpretation in his theological period, of course; but it opens up to us a new resource, of which his philosophy of life takes account. He did not concern himself with the usual interpretation of Scripture; that would proceed in the hands of expositors in general. He addressed himself rather to what he called the spiritual sense of the Word — a deeper meaning, really not *in* Scripture though reached by means of it, but existing in the whole body of truth or the unwritten Word, of

which Scripture is (in his view) the lowermost expression — the Word "reduced to suit man's mind." My point here is that this deeper meaning embraces a profound psychology of the religious experience. It is a story of the development of the inner life — how this begins in a person, and with what difficulties, temptations, resources, triumphs, it progresses. The deeper sense depicts, as Swedenborg says,[11] the amazing processes of rebirth. Once this fact is appreciated, it is apparent that the greater use of the deeper sense is not to throw light on Scripture, but to throw light on the inner life of the human being. The Bible reader can exclaim with a new significance,

> Thine eyes saw the sum total of my days,
> And in thy book they are all written;
> They were formed when there was not one among them.[12]

As a resource for understanding and giving aid to the inner life, the inner sense of Scripture has yet to be utilized. It remains for the future to employ it towards grasping and guiding that psychological remaking of the human being of which we spoke in our third talk.

Besides the Bible and the help it affords, I think we can say that as a philosopher Swedenborg was convinced that a further resource was required for guidance toward the goal of life. This consists in a reformulation of the great truths of Scripture for today. To Scripture Swedenborg brought the methods with which he had examined the data of nature; critically he examined the whole of Scripture for the teaching to be derived from its pages. It was the philosopher in him who saw how easily teachings could be erected apart from Scripture, and yet substantiated by them. They

needed rather to be drawn anew from Scripture as the source, so that the Scripture as a whole should be reflected in them. His philosophic criticism went further. He saw how remote much traditional teaching was from the realities and needs of the spiritual life, and even how untrue it was to those realities and not conducive to experience of them. In these and other ways he was convinced that in his day a restatement of the Christian message was imperative. We do not have to do, in these talks, with any call which he felt from on high. Such a call must itself have been real and cogent to him only as he saw that the spiritual needs of the day and the possibilities of Scripture did indeed demand a fresh and relevant presentation of the Gospel. He was convinced that certain truths alone would inspire a recovery of the Christian experience. More than that, he was clear that these truths, as living forces or dawning insights, were already going to work in the Christian mind. He sought to give systematic formulation to them. To say that he himself did not have this conviction or that his personal view did not run in this direction, is to take the reality out of any Divine commission which may have been laid on him. Looking out on the contemporary fortunes of the Christian experience, and on the unserviceableness of much traditional teaching, he was persuaded that an urgently needed resource was restatement of the Christian message. He attempted—under whatever high auspices we may be ready to see him doing so—a connected and systematic restatement, in which he employed Scripture, not as occasional substantiation, but as a constant source. The crucial pressure which is generally felt today for the valid reconstruction of

Christian thought is the same sense of emergency which he felt.

The critical philosopher in Swedenborg also considered the rôle of the institutional in Christendom. He felt that not only theology but the ecclesiastical institutions of Christendom had drifted out of touch with the Christian experience. The fact would be more apparent to detached philosophical inquiry than to a mind engrossed with ecclesiastical necessities. Mr. Rollo W. Brown has remarked:

> It is not too much to say that the Church has entered into competition with Christianity.[13]

So Swedenborg thought about institutional Christianity in his day. At least, ecclesiasticisms had fallen away from or ceased to promote as their *raison d'être* the spiritual life. This was a basic criticism in his later period; philosophical criticism was speaking, whatever else was. In his pre-theological period he was not unaware, for instance, that there might be tension between the members of the company of the goal and the demands of Christendom's ecclesiastical institutions. In the passage which we have already quoted from *Economy of the Animal Kingdom* there is an arresting bit at the very close. It is to the effect that the Scriptures can serve as a guide to the members of the city of God all over the world, "without violence to any form of ecclesiastical government." These last words hint that Swedenborg was aware that an ecclesiasticism and the company of the goal may go very different ways, creating a strain between them. Certainly the Church has not always known its contemporary saints.

But with all the criticism which he made, and the distinctions which he drew between the company of the goal and the ecclesiastical institution, Swedenborg was clear that the latter is necessary to extend religion. It is that company, be it said, that Swedenborg calls the "church." He likes to reserve the word to use so. This fellowship of the goal is world-wide; it is scattered, and is "one body" only in the Lord's sight; it is found in and out of ecclesiastical bodies. Never does an ecclesiastical body become identical with that company, but all churches, in our common sense of the word, are the recruiting ground and the agencies for that company. This is their true rôle. Functioning so, the institutions of religion are one of civilization's chief resources. Among the elements which Swedenborg says help constitute society is "the Divine among men," which is provided for in religious organizations and by a ministry. So runs in part that philosophy of society, of which there are hastily jotted outlines in his posthumous *Charity*.[14] Far more interested in the company of the goal, which, as we have said, is what he refers to as the "church," Swedenborg realizes perhaps all the more strongly the power of the institutional for good and bad. Ecclesiastical institutions serve their purpose as they augment the fellowship of the goal.

Into this general philosophy of life Swedenborg very interestingly brings the sacraments. He counts but two sacraments, Baptism and the Supper. Pursuing his general thought, he considers these as resources for life toward the goal. That is, he associates both sacraments, not so much with the ecclesiastical agencies which administer them, as with the company of the goal. Baptism is a reminder that there is such a

company. It is a standing invitation to membership in that company. The Sacrament of the Supper, for its part, is a dramatic enactment in a very simple ceremony of our necessary and daily reliance on extra-human resources — on a bread and wine which are offered in influences which come from God. Sacramentarianism has always sustained itself with a philosophy of symbolism. No less does Swedenborg's philosophy do so. Bread and wine become the symbols of influences reaching heart and mind from God. Not only in having a philosophy of symbolism, but also in seeing the offices of the sacraments in the light of his philosophy of the world and of the goal of life, it is Swedenborg the philosopher who speaks in much of what he has to say of the sacraments.

Philosophy, it would seem, is bound eventually to treat of any Figure of whom it can be said that He is the Light of the world. Of course what Swedenborg has to say of the Christ, the Christian's ultimate resource, is for the most part theology. But while theology gives Swedenborg the substance of his views, his philosophical reflection may fall upon those views. As a matter of fact, his philosophy from earlier days was retained and widely employed by him in his theological formulations; of this we cannot speak here. I shall indicate only one obviously philosophical reflection of his theological period. It is philosophy speaking when he says that Deity left totally undisclosed to the mind or "unseen," as God is in His infinite Being, gives one an indeterminate idea of God. The very language is philosophical. In his theology he had to do both with God "unseen," and also with God seen, as revealed in Christ. He declared that God, when conceived so as to

influence human life, was—even before Christ—everywhere conceived "under the human form." By this he is too careful a thinker to mean physical anthropomorphism. He is saying that God, to be well and redeemingly thought of, or to be "seen" at all, must be conceived in the terms of the highest we know, which means in terms of the highest in human personality, that is, in terms of love and wisdom, purpose and intelligence, and unconstrained inner life. That only then God means anything for human life, is a philosophical reflection. Else He is an *"ens rationis,"* and an indeterminate idea, which Swedenborg is fond of saying is no idea at all, but one which allows what we profess to call Divine to be dispersed into vague forces which invariably become identical with nature. It is also a philosophical criticism that this inadequacy in the thought of God is a source, as Swedenborg says, of naturalism. In other words, his philosophy of life succeeds in confronting us with the resource which the company of the goal has in the Christ. The Christ, as God "under the human form," has captained the company of the goal B.C. and A.D., whenever and wherever there was thought of God as including in His own Being the perfection of humanity.

* * *

In these four talks we have not by any means exhibited all sides of the philosophy of life which is to be distilled from Swedenborg's books. But surely it is a philosophy which throws light upon the ancient goal of life. It is practical from the outset in conceiving that goal as a company of men and women at the heart of every civilization, achieving the next possible justice, the next possible truth. Not unaware of the

mmortality of that company, it is a philosophy which gives startling importance, however, to the earth. It concerns itself very practically with the ways in which the company of the goal deals with the whole round of earthly existence, — our life-work, our recreations, our relationships with others, the larger relationships of class with class, nation with nation. Furthermore, Swedenborg's philosophy of life has a pronounced psychological side. It concerns itself earnestly with man's inner life, as well as with the conduct of life on the outward scene. Swedenborg is confident that there is a possible remaking of the human being; he expounds the manner of this psychological reconstruction. His philosophy moves along with balance and proportion between the claims of self-help and the claims of reliance on extra-human resources, and combines these for action upon them by the human will. The institutional, the doctrinal, even the sacramentarian in religious life, are not foreign to his philosophical interests.

We began our talks with pointing to the need the world has today for a unifying and commanding philosophy of life. We cited witnesses to this need. In Christendom the needed philosophy must be one of the Christian life. The absence of a philosophy which promises a new sway for Christianity is what earnest observers deplore.

> We have largely ceased to utilise the matchless power and strength that come through religion. We have failed to advance in our comprehension and understanding of spiritual realities. We are losing our faith, and with it our sense of spiritual direction.
>
> What men and women are yearning and groping for today are spiritual values, such as inner happiness unconquerable by outward circumstances, joy in daily work and satisfaction even in commonplace labor, the affec-

> tion of a chosen few and the respect of all, some objective of existence which colors all life with beauty.
>
> I mean that if our civilization cannot be brought to understand more clearly and to believe more strongly in the fundamental teachings of Jesus Christ and the principles on which He staked His life, our civilization cannot survive.

I quote these expressions of our need today from an address delivered by the Honorable Francis B. Sayre before the Foreign Missions Council Conference of North America.[15] In one more way these words of Dr. Sayre define the need to which the philosophy is directed, which I have tried to outline. I have no thought that one formulation of a practical, Christian philosophy of life will fill the whole need, or preempt the whole field even if alone it would fill the need; I only say that in the philosophy of life to be gathered from Swedenborg we have one which is directed to the need, one renewing "our sense of spiritual direction," offering "some objective of existence which colors all life with beauty," and resting upon and seeking to make currently valid the fundamental teachings of Jesus Christ. It is a philosophy with which to interpret life and the world. The whole tenor of it is to guide to noble living and immortal life.

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